THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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LIFE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CLIO STANLEY.

There runs a scarlet thread, and here a white;
A golden daylight here, and there the night;
Flowers drop their fragrant petals round
The hem of one glad day; a mound
Of ashes, sifted by some cruel wind,
Is all that tells where that sweet day to find!

Here blooms a purple flower by passion fed,
There lie the orange buds that crowned us, wed;
A knot of violets here from baby's grave—
To breathe of that sweet life we could not save;
And here a willow trails its branches green
Across some pleasant path by human eyes unseen!

Just here, a trill of song—of happy song
That oft at midnight floated by our door;
And there a wail of anguish drifts along,
To swell the chorus of the Nevermore.
From gold to dun—and still from grave to gay,
So runs the tide of human life away.

MARK JARRETT'S DAISY.

THE WILD FLOWER OF HAZELBROOK.

BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET; OR, THE WONDER OF KINGSWOOD CHASE," &c.

BREAKING THE CHAIN.

CHAPTER I.

"SHE APPEARED CLOTHED IN LIGHT."

"Where are we now?"

"Black Down, a course."

That is what you said in the same calf-like way at least an hour ago, after we had gained the top of that long, winding, steep, never-ending ravine. 'Hain't morn two mile an' arf to Hazelbrook neow," you brayed with a grin which would have mortified and vexed that celebrated cat of Cheshire; 'this be Black Down.' This is Black Down with a vengeance. Why, we have traversed five miles at least, wandering and winding ankle deep in sand, through this maze of dark heath, with nothing else in sight—absolutely nothing else."

This was said by a young man of about twenty years of age, dressed in a well-fitting walking costume which exhibited, not only his well-knit and well-formed, but his really gracefully modelled limbs.

He turned his face—his strikingly handsome face—and his rich dark purple—bishop's purple—eyes to the four cardinal points of the compass, and beheld nothing but sky and heath.

A tumultuous assemblage of dark red, blue black, gray masses of cloud clambering riotously and boisterously over a quickly diminishing expanse of pale green and golden heaven, and beneath, an arched plain covered with dark-leaved and magenta-belled ericas, but too often sold to the confiding public, with a taste for choice plants, as rare Cape heaths.

There was not a sign-post, a tree, or even a clump of shrubs to serve as an indicator to the place to which they were anxious to direct their steps. There were multitudes of tracks, it is true, but they were all alike and ran between interspaces in the black heath, very much after the fashion of the lines on a railway map of the United Kingdom, darting, shooting, stretching in every imaginable or possible direction, leading everywhere—anywhere "out of the world."

After vainly attempting to fix for himself a direction to follow, the young gentleman turned his bright, expressive, and now not very gentle eyes upon his guide, and said, in a tone that had not the promise of a glass of ale lurking anywhere near it—

"Where, in the name of the will-o'-the-wisp, does Hazelbrook lie?"

The rustic, who had a face as round as a skittle-ball, and a complexion of the same hue as when that pretty little toy first leaves the hand of the turner, a pair of round eyes, of the color of milk, when it has rather more than its legitimate share of "Simpson;" a nose of the quaint form of that "leathern bottel," about which our ancestors sang, and from which they drank so often and so much; and a mouth which, without an affectation of struggle, could have bolted a fair-sized turnip as a disciple of Hahnemann swallows a homœopathic pill, turned the light of his countenance full upon his employer.

It displayed about the same animation and intelligence as that of a "heathen Chinee" under the influence of his "peculiar drink," and the "fool stinted and cried ay?"

The young gentleman knitted his brows, and in measured, emphatic tones exclaimed—

"Point out—in what—direction—Hazelbrook—lies. You understand that, I suppose?"

The bumpkin scratched, without any coyness, his cloud of straying, unadjusted locks, of the hue of dusty thistle-down, and with unaffected candor, replied—

"A dunno!"

"Why, you villain without conscience," cried the gentleman, angrily, "did you not undertake to guide me thither?"

"A did," confessed the clown, with frank unreserve.

"Then, why the—the—dickens don't you do it?" roared his employer.

"A ca-an't now," returned the peasant swain, taking both hands to exercise his scalp, and gazing ruefully about him. "Bain't my fault neither."

"You do not mean in the most filmy way to indicate the fault is mine, I hope," exclaimed the young traveller, widely extending his eyelids.

"But a do though," responded the joskin, with a saucy grunt. "You hobbed about a picking they wil' plants, an' then of a sudden storm-clouds come oop, an' shut out sun, an' a missed path. 'Tain't easy to keep it in broad day. Precious easy to lose it in twilight, when every track be like t'other, specially t'one we oughter kep.' Thought I should a struck it agen afore this, but a bain't. Dunno where we be now."

As the last word left his lips, a sharp flash of lightning, with startling suddenness, cast a blue glare over the dark heath, and made both the wayfarers utter an exclamation.

The young gentleman again surveyed the prospect with an eager scrutiny; but stretched around him in every direction lay two or three miles of heath, exactly similar in all respects, while the heavens were blacker and angrier than ever, and the darkness was rapidly increasing.

"This is an agreeable situation," he muttered, a little solicitously, "and promises to be truly felicitous. Why, hang it, boy," he cried, addressing the rustic sharply, "if we had kept straight on, we ought to have come to a vestige of some habitation."

"That be it," rejoined the bumpkin, in a tone that indicated it would be followed by a howl. "We haint agone straight for'ard. We been a doublin' back'ards an' for'ards through t' gorse, like hounds off scent."

"Hounds off the scent?" repeated the young gentleman, savagely. "You are one at all events. I cannot divine how you managed it, with so much nose to spare."

It was clear, however, that some course must be decided on, and that promptly, too, for the thickening of the huge, rapidly-sweeping banks of cloud, not only darkened seriously the space around, but a rolling mist seemed to be advancing in the direction of the wind, and menaced to completely shut out all possibility of recovering the track again before the following morning.

Flashes of lightning began to follow each other in rapid succession, and a low, ominous booming in the distance told that the thunderstorm had burst, and that not far away.

"A don't loik thoonder an' lightning," suddenly bleated the rustic, with chattering teeth, as a blinding, lurid sheet of flame played vividly about them, and almost appeared to scorch them with its hot breath, while it left the heath very much darker than before.

"I never met with one who was likely to be deliriously fascinated with it in such a spot, and at such a time as this," rejoined his employer, with a bitter laugh, as he looked wistfully upwards.

Heavy rain-drops began to fall, and a low, hoarse sound, like the growling of a distant hurricane, rose up to their ears.

"I should not take the difficulty so much to heart," he pursued, reflectively, "if there were a place of refuge to make for; but to be exposed on this lofty ridge, without a tree or cover of any kind, is like tempting Providence. Do you not know any place about here where we could obtain something like a temporary shelter from the fury of the storm, for it will be tremendous, I can perceive?"

"There be Jarrett's 'Ood," returned the country lout, with a snuffling moan.

"Where?" cried the gentleman, eagerly, for the rain was now falling fast, and the mist was slowly and surely shutting out the distance all round.

"A dunno—a dunno!" wailed the oaf, scratching his poll violently, for his mind as violently misgave him.

"Think, fool!" roared his companion, as a flash of lightning made day of the spot for an instant, and the blackest night of it a moment afterwards.

"O Lord! O Lord!" groaned the terrified rustic, stamping his feet. "It be away down hill-side, but which way I canna say, an' I be afear'd to try now, for there be a lot o' sand-pits, ninety feet deep, an' four or five pools a dozen feet to bottom, spread about, an' a—an' a—dunno where they be now. O Lord!"

"Is the wood towards where the sun sets?" inquired the excited traveller.

"A goes down to Jarrett's Dingle, right away to Jarrett's Grange, which stands by the rise o' Hazelbrook. Old Jarrett lives there, he do."

"Who's Jarrett?" demanded the young traveller.

"Why, old Mark Jarrett," returned the rustic, lucidly. "Every fool knows Mark Jarrett."

"You do, of course?"

"Think a did, too! Better say you ain't heard of Mark Jarrett's Daisy nuther!"

"I have never heard of his 'wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower.'"

"A lives wi' old Mark Jarrett. She be the talk o' the country side. She be an—O Lord a massy on us!"

A tremendous sheet of lightning, followed by a sputtering crash of thunder, arrested his speech, and terrified him out of the very few senses he possessed. It was accompanied by a storm of rain, which absolutely not only deprived both of breath, but of the power of movement.

It was in this moment of supreme awe, if not of great peril, that the quick ears of the young traveller caught the sounds of a powerful horse's feet, as at a full gallop they came with heavy thuds on the sand, advancing from the crest of the hill to the spot where he was standing, irresolute in what direction to direct his steps.

He had no doubt that he would be able to procure some information from the coming horseman on which he could act, and he called lustily to the rustic to help him to attract his attention.

While thus engaged, he perceived a gray figure in the mist swiftly approaching; but the darkness and rolling vapor were so thick that he was unable to decipher any definite form. Still, it was evident that the horse was galloping over the heath, leaping all impediments, and recklessly plunging forward, regardless of any track, as if madly racing for a life.

In another moment, as it seemed, it was thundering upon them, dashing on to the very spot where they were standing. They had barely time to spring, with a cry of alarm, out of its way, than it swept grandly and with tremendous speed past them.

A bright blue quivering flash of lightning, intensely vivid, simultaneously disclosed, with clear and brilliant sharpness, every line, form, and color of the horse and its rider.

To the overwhelming amazement of the young traveller, he beheld a young girl seated upon a bright bay hunter, equal to a mount of sixteen stone.

The young lady wore upon her head a Rubens' hat; below it streamed her long tresses, unrestrained by a fillet or band, or ligature of any kind, spreading out behind her in the wind like a fluttering gauzy veil of golden bronze silken filaments. Her face in the unearthly glare of the livid lightning was white as snow. Its expression, however, was calm, unperturbed, even slate, and looked supernaturally beautiful. She was attired in a flowing habit of some light texture, and sat her horse as firmly, as steadily, as gracefully as if enjoying a pleasant canter on a sunny day over a breezy down.

Momentarily, her countenance changed, for the same flash of lightning which had so suddenly disclosed her charming face to the young traveller betrayed—or rather exhibited—his to her. She extended her orbs, and her lips parted slightly with amazement, as if she had unexpectedly beheld a spectre, and a moment more the violet light vanished and shut out each from the other in impenetrable darkness.

But though the wondrous apparition had disappeared from the young gentleman's straining eyes, the beat of the horse's feet, as they sped clattering over heath and sand, yet remained plainly audible, and they woke up to rapid animation the hitherto paralyzed, convulsed, almost pulverized lout, who, tossing his hands wildly in the air, screeched out, with husky rapture—

"There goes Mark Jarrett's Daisy."

With a mad bound, like a lost lurcher who had suddenly discovered the trail of his master, he dashed off in pursuit of the fair equestrian, leaving the young traveller alone on the heath, perfectly mute and motionless with amazement.

CHAPTER II.

BREAKING THE CHAIN.

The name which our young traveller inherited from his ancestors was Rokeby, and that given to him by his godfathers and godmothers Wilfred. He was not what is termed "the last of his race;" but he was the only son of the head of a very ancient family.

His father, Alvanley Rokeby, had entered life a young, bright man, of great promise. He was an excellent scholar, having taken high honors at his university, and was distinguished in all field sports, being a crack shot, a daring rider after hounds, a skilful cricketer, and a first-rate oarsman. He was considered to be the handsomest man in his circle, and a very brilliant career was predicted for him.

While fortune was lavishing upon him caresses and smiles, he fell passionately in love with a young and beautiful girl, who not only reciprocated his love, but idolized him.

The night before their intended marriage, her father's country mansion, in which she was staying, took fire. The wing in which she was sleeping was already enveloped in flames, when she was aroused from a happy dream, and in her frantic terror she fled upstairs, flight after flight, until she emerged upon the flat roof of a turret. In her frenzy, hearing the cries, and seeing faces glaring in the red firelight beneath her, unconscious of what she was about to do, but seeing help only where she perceived human beings, she leaped from an embrasure, and was picked up a dead and almost shapeless mass.

Alvanley Rokeby after this dreadful catastrophe became a recluse, and appeared to have done with life. Yet, years after, when he had been forgotten, he abruptly reappeared in society, and that under circumstances which caused no little amazement and conversation.

A brilliant meteor had appeared in the county, in the form of a Miss Blanche Vaux—a youthful Diana, who took all the hearts of the young rich men by storm. She had a strikingly handsome face, a lithe, graceful form, and her attractions of person and manner were declared to be irresistible.

She was the best and most daring equestrian in the county. No meet was complete without her, and "ox-fence" and "bull-fence," however formidable, never compelled her to swerve from her course and seek an easier route. She had fairly won several times the brush; and to use the expression of old Jack Holyoake, the first whipper-in of the Chute hounds, "she was the cream of a fox-hunter."

She was also the possessor of womanly accomplishments, and was the belle of the assemblies and circles in which she moved. She was well descended and a wealthy heiress; therefore, among her swarm of suitors, she numbered not a few of the most desirable catches in a dozen counties as well as her own.

While thus elevated to the position of the adored of all admirers and suitors, while society was racking its brain and straining its eyes to see to whom she would "toss her handkerchief," while suitors were pouring upon her glances of passionate love, and scowling and gnashing their teeth at each other, Alvanley Rokeby reappeared.

He was paler, sterner, than in the old bright days, and his face bore the traces of a long, embittered seclusion, but still he was a handsome, noble-looking gentleman, and attracted the most flattering attention wherever he presented himself.

He first received an introduction to Miss Blanche Vaux at a hunt, and kept by her side over the ugliest country the Chute hounds had ever hunted. He appeared at balls, and entertainments, and grand festivals when she was present, but seemed to pay her but little court.

Yet one day, when returning homeward together upon their wearied steeds, at the close of a singularly "brilliant run" after a fox, they were accidentally brought together alone in a fir wood.

Casting his glances about him to see that he was not observed, Alvanley commenced a low and earnest conversation with his beautiful young companion. Before they gained the end of the bridle-path through the plantation, he extended his hand to her, and said, quietly—

"Will you accept it for life? It is yours if you will."

She fastened her brilliant eyes upon him with a direct, steadfast look. A sharp flush, crimson as the heart of a rose, for a moment suffused her cheek and brow. Then she stretched forth her small, white, ungauntletted hand and clasped his.

"There is mine—it is yours for life!" she exclaimed, in a low, firm tone.

He pressed her hand with a sudden warmth; his upper lip trembled, but he did not say a word.

A bright tear sprang into her eye.

"You will have to bear with me a little, Al," she exclaimed, with a touch of tenderness in her tone. Then, as she caught his eye settling on her own, she brushed away the tell-tale tear, and smiling, added, "You have the soul of a gentleman, and you will not beat me, I know."

Then she pushed her horse to a canter, and led the way at a smart pace out of the wood.

Two persons less likely to unite themselves together in the lawful bands of wedlock than Alvanley Rokeby and Blanche Vaux it was difficult to conceive. He was still so cold, stern, reserved, and averse from the pleasures of life, although he had again mixed himself up in them; and she still continued the heroine of the field, the glittering star of all the most brilliant assemblies in and out of London, and defiantly independent of the prim-and-starch regulations of the world in which she moved.

The motive, however, which induced him to propose to her and her to accept him was a secret which both preserved with remarkable closeness and unanimity.

A general storm of howling derision arose among her suitors, and the young eligible maidens who were panting for an offer, at what they termed this ill-sorted match after it was announced, but no one ventured to seek for an explanation of the anomaly from either of the persons most deeply interested in the connection.

The marriage was celebrated with unusual splendor, and the happy pair proceeded to the Continent. On their return to England, Alvanley Rokeby did not enter society again.

He resumed his old seclusion, while his wife hunted and danced as before, and did whatever she listed to do.

Wilfred Rokeby was the only result of this strange marriage. His father, without betraying any dislike, saw him but twice while he was an infant, and very rarely while passing through his educational course from youth to manhood.

He was, perhaps, what might be termed "his mother's boy." He was like her in face and style, was quick-tempered, bold to hardihood, hated to be thwarted in anything, and was fierce, restless, untractable, if obstacles interposed between him and doing whatever he felt impelled to do.

She had always treated him with a fondling, caressing tenderness, yet she regarded him rather as a "pretty pet" than her own flesh and blood. She had not nursed him herself, and during his infancy only saw him when he was good and smiling, and in all respects a little delightful something that ought to be devoured.

Afterwards, when he could toddle about, she continued to interest herself in his progress, as she might have done had he been her Italian greyhound. At first she called him Wilfred a little grandly, but by degrees she used the diminutive Wil, or, as she pronounced it, Wyll, and this became afterwards Willy—a nickname which among his very few relatives and friends had adhered to him from boyhood until now.

To these slight revelations concerning him, we may add that he had been abroad for two years, and was on his way from the sea coast to a seat of his father's in Hampshire. Finding himself detained at a small station through the usual non-fitting of the trains of two companies who divided the traffic, he had resolved to send on his luggage, and walk some five or six miles across country to his destination. At a little village, resting at the foot of a "down" or mountainous hill which he had to cross on his way, he procured, as the track on the top was difficult to follow, a guide, and we have already seen with what result.

When the lout dashed off full gallop—and also full scare, for he had a horror of being lost on Black Down while the storm continued—he left, as we have said, Wyll Rokeby standing mute and motionless, with that wondrously handsome girl's face still gleaming like an angel's seen in an electric light in his vision; and it was not until another flash of lightning, followed by a fearful crash of thunder, startled him to consciousness, that he attempted to follow the same route the rustic had taken in pursuit of "Jarrett's Daisy."

Away he went at his best speed, too, in the darkness, for if there was one thing more than another upon which he had resolved, it was that he would gratify his eyes with another look at "Jarrett's Daisy."

"What a divine face!" he muttered, as he stumbled and crashed on. "It seemed to lift my heart with a kind of delicious vibration up to my throat. And the eyes and teeth so familiar to me, too. Where can I have seen her? Have I ever seen her before—in my dreams? Bosh! However, I will see her again, and—"

He pitched headlong into a hollow, partly filled with water, and thus his soliloquy was brought to an abrupt termination.

Until now he had heard the voice of the country boy, crying "Yoicks! yoicks!" in order to attract the notice of the flying maiden; but when he had scrambled out of the pit and resumed his race, the voice had ceased, and he was left to hurry on, in silence and alone, he could not tell whither.

Still he kept bravely onward, and the lightning rewarded him with the sight of a wood stretching away on his right hand.

"Jarrett's Wood, by Jove!" he ejaculated, triumphantly, and went at it at the double.

But the storm had cleared away before he had found for himself a way through the black mass of roaring trees; and when he arrived at a five-barred gate, and had leaped it, he found himself on a turnpike road, running, as well as he could tell by the position of the moon, which was now visible, nearly east and west.

Taking a westerly course, he pursued its windings, at times beneath overarching trees, which completely shut out all light, and compelled him almost to grope his way, and occasionally through cuttings deep enough to indicate a long tunnel not far ahead. At length he reached three cross roads, the common perplexity of which some unusually thoughtful parish authority had ruined by erecting a finger-post with three arms.

The moon's bright rays enabled him to see that one directed him to Cradleigh, whence he had come; the second to Fressingfield, of which interesting and possibly thriving place he had never heard; and the third pointed out the way to Hazelbrook, to which he was bound, for about a mile and a half from its rustic suburbs was situated Fairholme Priors, a pretty estate belonging to his father, and of which his mother was fond, because there was much good hunting in the neighborhood.

There was not a word, however, on the direction post concerning Jarrett's Wood, Jarrett's Dingle, or Jarrett's Grange; nothing that gave him, or offered, an inkling in which direction they lay. Therefore, to set out at such a time, and under such circumstances, in the hope of discovering the one where Jarrett's Daisy was blooming, would be a wild-goose chase, which he had too much common sense to attempt.

Nevertheless, he delivered himself of some very strong objurgations, addressed to that flail-legged rustic, who had so selfishly bolted from him, and so inconsiderately left him in the lurch. There was, however, no help for it; so, with a sigh of irritation, and an expletive, which did not furnish an unqualified proof that he was a scrupulous member of the Young Men's Christian Association, he took the road to Hazelbrook.

Down a steep hill, through a rutty, miry lane, and out into an open common, at which point—the moon having disappeared behind a cloud—the heavens opened, the rain came down in sheets, and soaked him to the skin. In the distance, however, slumbered Hazelbrook; and by the roadside stood the sign of the principal inn, the Swan—that worshipped idol of provincial innkeepers. Here he obtained a "fly," and was borne on its wings—that is, its wheels—to Fairholme Priors.

A charming suite of apartments awaited him. All that comfort and luxury could suggest attended him; and he flung himself into a downy bed, intending to throw off his fatigue before morning, by a long, sound, refreshing sleep.

But Jarrett's Daisy stopped the way.

Her strange, weird, fascinating face haunted him; and presented itself to him the moment he closed his eyes—as pale green spots float on the vision of individuals who have been indulging themselves by staring at the sun with the naked eye.

So he lay, and tossed, and tumbled, and fretted, and vexed himself by wondering who and what she was, by speculating in the most absurd and chimerical fashion concerning her, and by mixing her up with his fair cousin, Gabrielle Luttrell.

With something like a gasp of fright, he now remembered that he was betrothed to that young lady.

Then went there on more mixing Jarrett's Daisy and Gabrielle, and Gabrielle and the Daisy, until nature became exhausted, when the dawn came, and he slept.

Slept, to mentally occupy himself, armed with a riding whip—at times with a pitch-fork—in pursuing his rustic guide, who had adopted the form of a huge brown locust, and was leading him over brake and mire, buzzing and grinning, and extorting bad language from him, in a most provoking way.

It was late before he appeared to breakfast, which had been prepared for him in a pretty primrose-tinted room overlooking the garden grounds.

He found there his Cousin Gabrielle awaiting him; and curiously to him her presence seemed to send a strange sickening, numbing cold thrill through every fibre of his frame, which for an instant confused and disturbed him. He, however, rapidly recovered himself; and for the first time,

perhaps, in his life, assuming a frank, genial manner—for hitherto that, at least, had been natural to him—he expressed his happiness at meeting her again after a rather long separation.

Quick as he to feel it, she noticed a change in him. Slight and evanescent as it was, swift in its coming and going as a passing thought, yet she was conscious of it, and troubled by it.

It was not his selection or arrangement of words, not an alteration in the tone of his voice, not any constraint in his manner of greeting her, which made her feel as if she had, when most unprepared, received an electric shock. Outwardly, he was all that he had ever been to her, and it certainly required the peculiar subtle, refined susceptibility of impression which is a part of the nature of woman to detect such change as there might have arisen in his feelings towards her. But she detected the existence of the vague, undefined, troubling "something."

She raised her eyes imperceptibly beneath her long, fair lashes, and peered swiftly at his face. His countenance was as handsome and open, as bright and ingenuous, as she had always known it; his eyes as dancing and expressive, his smile as winningly attractive, and his complexion as clear and healthful as heretofore; yet behind all there was a secret. It had reference to her, and she silently resolved that she would become mistress of it without losing a moment.

She was as nearly as possible the same age as her cousin, and possessed a commanding figure, although it had a look of slightness, even thinness. She was, indeed, a statuesque blonde—a living Parian statue; to the eye a cold, emotionless young lady, whose frigid equanimity nothing ruffled. She preserved her position upon a chair, a settee, even a couch, with a silent immobility. She floated along a room with a noiseless, gliding step, and appeared somewhat as if she had just quitted a pedestal in a sculpture gallery, to indulge in a little elegant exercise. No one would have challenged her with having been at any period of her existence a hoyden—with having ever chased a butterfly in her days of short garments, *à la danseuse de l'opera*, hopped, skipped, or jumped with a skipping-rope, or bounded skyward on a swing, making the air ring with her silvery laughter.

No! If a comparison respecting her might be made, she was the incarnation of that ideal model young lady who is held up as a "pattern" by most "lady principals" before the eyes of such of their youthful maiden pupils who, blessed with a natural flow of animal spirits, dearly love "a bit of fun" whenever fortune favors them, even though it be on the sly. It was doubtful whether, indeed, Gabrielle had ever heard of a "bit of fun," or, having heard it named, understood its meaning.

She had large, pale gray, somewhat pensive, eyes, fringed with long, light silken lashes; but her other features were symmetrically regular, without being striking. Her complexion was as fair as a lily, while her hair was in harmony—a light primrose, profuse in quantity, beautifully arranged, and gleamed in the sunlight like a rich satin.

She was generally considered to be a beautiful type of one of her high-born sex; equally aristocratic, and even less approachable. This, in truth, was one of her strong convictions, secretly entertained perhaps, but not the less decided.

An earl's coronet was dancing before her eyes, not yet tangible enough to grasp, but it did glitter in the distance upon a young branch of an old genealogical tree, and her fingers itched sorely to clutch it.

Like a grim, misty shadow between it and her, however, interposed the form of Wilfred Rokeby, to whom she was betrothed; whom she could not afford to resign until the coronet became a certainty; and yet who, if the fact of her betrothal became known, would, in all human probability, effectually prevent her securing the prize, for which in her inward soul she yearned with an uncontrollable passion.

Wilfred could, however, give her a first-rate establishment, and surround her with all the luxuries and pleasures, the dignities and homages, pertaining to a very superior station; and as he and his possessions were a fact already, as it were, in her hands, and the coronet was as yet little more than a sanguine, hopeful dream, she did not dare even to intimate that she considered herself free to choose her husband where and whence she listed.

Withal, the undefined something in his present manner started an idea, and for a moment filled her with a faint tremor, for it might lead to extraordinary results; yet he was not able to discover that she was less placid and serene than she appeared to be, and was, before he addressed a word to her.

Employing herself with the usual lady-like industry and perseverence in the execution of some needle-work embroidery, she answered calmly and fully all the questions he addressed to her respecting his parents. His father, she informed him, with the manner of one who was neither surprised nor affected in any way by the circumstance, kept himself aloof from every one but his own two or three personal attendants, as he had done for years, while his mother betrayed no diminution in her love for horses and dogs, and her passion for the sports of the chase.

"How does she sustain her active, exciting out-of-door pursuits?" he asked, with a natural solicitude.

"As well as ever," she returned, in her cold, affected way. "She is a perfect emblem of rustic health; her complexion has the hue of a Hereford apple—"

"Or a peach," he corrected, a little quickly.

She glanced at him.

"A peach, if you will—a fully-ripe peach," she rejoined, quietly; "and she possesses the boisterous vivacity of a college boy on the first day of his long vacation."

"The life and spirit of the society she delighteth to honor, I'll be sworn," he added, with a fond smile.

"Of course," she replied, fastening her attention apparently upon her work. "She commands, too, as great a following as ever—quite a *queue*, I assure you. In fact, I was a little startled the other day on accompanying her to a meet—"

"You, Gabrielle!" he interrupted, with a look of surprise.

"I went in an open landau, unquestionably," she responded, without change of voice or feature. "Equally, of course, Mrs. Rokeby rode to hounds. There was a remarkable gathering of very distinguished people, and your mamma, in the eyes of the hunting man, was evidently the queen of the assemblage."

Wilfred's brow slightly lowered.

"Really, the way they courted, flattered, and paid her homage was a sight to see," she pursued, without looking at him, but feeling that she was annoying him beyond conception—and she had a hidden reason for that bit of malevolence. "One would have thought," she presently subjoined, "it to be quite impossible that any one could have divided those honors with her; yet it seems she has a rival—a most remarkable and a successful rival too."

A smile passed over her face, as if she really enjoyed the notion.

"Indeed! Who?" demanded Wilfred, rather shortly.

"Mark Jarrett's Daisy," returned Gabrielle, placidly, without looking up from her work.

Wilfred felt very much like leaping from his chair and bounding half across the chamber; but with a strong effort he curbed his impulse, and responded, a little in his throat—

"Mark Jarrett's Daisy! Pray, who may she be?"

He watched his fair cousin's handsome face very closely as she answered him.

He saw her lift her shoulders, and her upper lip curl contemptuously.

"You are really a surprising person, Willy—a wonder in these parts, as the steward says of others in your case—not to know Mark Jarrett's Daisy."

"I have been away, you know," he objected.

"After all," she pursued, proceeding with her work, "it is not wonderful, either; for the strange part of the matter is that no one knows who this curious person is, excepting, I suppose, Mark Jarrett, or the girl herself."

Wilfred rose from his seat, and paced the chamber thoughtfully, and with a grave face. Presently, he turned to his cousin, and said, a little haughtily—

"I do not quite comprehend your meaning, Gabrielle, when you speak of my mother having a rival. Be good enough to explain yourself."

There was a slight flutter in her eyelids, but none in her even tone, as she replied—

"Of course, the thing is absurd. As you do not—indeed, cannot—know anything of this wild flower of Hazelbrook, I may tell you that she is a young creature supposed to live at Jarrett's Grange, although no one ever seems to be in a position to prove that as a fact. She is never seen until, in the language of the field—the common parlance here—immediately after 'a splendid burst.' Then, as if at the summons of a magician, she appears like a spectral horsewoman in close pursuit of the hounds—the wild huntsman of Der Freischütz converted into a young woman, seated upon a priceless barb, with a matchless reputation. There is no leap, however desperate, which she refuses. She takes every fence, whether termed 'ox,' or 'bull,' or any other choice appellation, for they give these sort of horrors the most extraordinary names, bounds over every brook or river with a flying leap, and never, it is asserted, comes to grief—that unpleasant grief, you know, Wil, which is peculiar to the hunting-field—and she is always in at the death. The most astounding thing of all, it seems, is that she refuses the brush—*the brush*, Willy—but, instead, as the Earl of Marston observes, wittily, 'brushes herself.' That is, mysteriously vanishes even as she appeared."

"But what has my mother to do with all this?" remarked Wilfred, singularly interested, although he tried to seem indifferent.

"Oh, everything! Your mamma considers herself to be the bright particular star of these horsey amusements; but do what she will, this girl—this singular person—has superior mounts, outpaces her, outleaps her and outrides her, when to be first at the disgusting exhibition of the kind of apotheosis of the wretched fox is considered to be the very acme of honor—that son of honor, of course. I assure you, the mind of your mamma—I think most ridiculously is greatly exercised about this creature—this 'Jarrett's Daisy.'"

Wilfred felt exceedingly mortified and annoyed by the tone and style adopted by his cousin in the strange narration she had just delivered herself of. She referred both to his mother and the beautiful young girl he had himself seen under unusual circumstances in a tone of contempt, which he felt disposed to resent. At the same time, the memory of his betrothal to the pale, passionless girl before him disturbed him yet more painfully than before.

"I think you do not quite remember, Belle, that you are speaking of my mother," he observed, a little stiffly.

"Indeed, I think I ought, as I shall be one day compelled to call her 'dear mamma' as well as you, Wil," she answered, unhesitatingly, and smooth as her tone was, it seemed acridly.

"Not compelled," he said, sharply.

She raised her graceful shoulders towards her eyes.

"A choice of terms, I apprehend, Willy," she proceeded, as she quietly plied her needle. "We were contracted, chained to each other, you know, when we were children, and had no voice in the matter. It was, of course, assumed that our predilections would conform to our interests."

"A most preposterous assumption," he exclaimed, hotly, and unguardedly.

It was as if he had suddenly treated her to a shower-bath of the iciest water—of hail, in fact.

She did not speak or look up for at least a minute; but there was a crawling tremor agitating every nerve in her frame.

"He has fallen in love with some one else," she thought, as if she were at the same time compressing her heart with a cold, mailed hand.

Presently she said, with the slightest perceptible yawn—

"Why preposterous, Willy? Is it so very unnatural that I should—like you?"

"No, Belle, or that I should like you," he returned, impetuously. "You are a charming, graceful, lady-like girl enough, and some men would fly into raptures about you; but that is not the question at issue."

"Pray what is?" she demanded, with an air of serene innocence, although there was the glitter of the snake in her eye as she fastened it upon her needle-work.

"It is not unnatural that you should come to know one whom you would like—nay, love—better than me," he proceeded, and with no little emphasis.

"Or you to have fallen in love with a houri you would vastly prefer to me," she responded, quickly, turning her pale gray eyes directly and steadfastly upon his.

He waved his hand with an impatient gesture.

"It is not so," he said, quickly; "but admit it. If that case, are we to carry out our compact, and be miserable for life?"

She leaned slowly back on her seat, and looked meditatively upon the open country seen through the window.

"I suppose," she presently observed, as if reflectively, "we shall have to make a gulp, and swallow any such obtrusive impulses of the heart if they should ever attempt to make their presence known to either of us."

"I am not at all disposed to do anything of the kind," he responded, with prompt warmth.

She thought of the coronet. It glittered fascinatingly before her mental vision. She glanced at him askance, and elevating her eyebrows, said slowly—

"Do you mean to infer, Cousin Willy, that if I became weak enough to permit my heart to slip through my fingers, and were to come to you, and say, 'I am fearfully afraid I have lost my heart to one of your sex whose name is not Wilfred Rokeby, will you annul our betrothal,' that you would answer, 'Yes, will I?'"

"At once," he exclaimed, almost passionately. "Do you think that I would make you my wife after I knew that your love had been given to another? No superhuman power should compel me. Suppose, Belle, I were to come to you with a similar tale, would you not immediately discard me as a husband from your thoughts?"

"But are we not irrevocably bound by this contract?" she asked, evasively.

"Under certain pecuniary penalties only, I think," he answered, contemptuously. "Those are considerations which I scorn. Yet, I think, in the event of a mutual agreement between us the penalties would be inoperative."

She became silent again. The coronet renewed its visit to her mind's eye. Yet if the earl proposed not, and no other titled personage did, it would be of the utmost importance to her to fall back upon Wilfred.

Keeping, however, closely concealed these considerations, after a brief silence, she said, as she gazed at him between the lashes of her nearly closed lids—

"Do you wish me to understand, Wil, that you are leading up to a proposition which is paramount in your mind?"

"I think, Gabrielle, that a contract made without consulting our tastes, inclinations, or wishes, was a gratuitous piece of domestic tyranny, to which I am most indisposed to submit," he answered, gravely and firmly. "It is my wish that we should agree to liberate each other from these manacles, and be free to wed the object of our choice, whomsoever that may prove to be, even if it should turn out you and me after all. Without constraint, I am sure that we shall like each other better: and if we agree eventually to unite our hands and destinies together, we shall be obeying the dictates of our loving hearts. If, on the contrary—"

"Do not conjure up the other picture, Willy," she interposed, with a cold smile. "It is flattering to neither of us. Now, suppose I assent, and join with you in this new compact, I must stipulate that it be kept a close secret between us."

"A secret!" he repeated, with some little surprise.

"There are many reasons, in order that we may faithfully execute it, why it must be held a secret in our keeping alone," she pursued, with more earnestness than she had yet betrayed. "One, especially, is that I am not equal to combats, and if our arrangement were to become known, there would be an awful—"

"Hubbub—I understand," he interrupted. "Very well, Belle, then I promise you I will not communicate it to any one unless it be to—"

"No one," she interposed in her turn, and a little peremptorily. "Give me your word of honor as a gentleman, that you will reveal our agreement to no living person without my permission, and there is my hand upon the bargain."

He took her hand and pressed it.

"Belle, I give you my word of honor as a gentleman, to keep our compact sacred until you lift the seal from my lips," he exclaimed, with some solemnity.

She slightly pressed his hand with her cold fingers as she looked into his eyes, and he felt an impulse to take her into his arms and imprint a kiss on her alabaster face, but that, strangely, the dazzling countenance of Jarrett's Daisy seemed to interpose and deter him.

She rose to her feet with apparently calm self-possession, although there was a faint blue tinge about her mouth and temples.

"From this moment, Wilfred Rokeby," she said, in strangely freezing tones, "our betrothal is to be held binding on neither, should one or the other determine to annul it."

"Precisely," he answered, quickly, almost sternly; "positively so."

"Unless—" she suggested.

"Without qualification," he interrupted, imperatively.

She smiled upon him it seemed superciliously, raised her shoulders a little, and said—

"Brother of the Sun, your word is law. I will apprise your mamma of your arrival. I do not think she is acquainted with it. You will remember your pledged word, Wilfred Rokeby?"

Turning her face from him, she glided from the room.

"So," she reflected, as she gained the corridor, "he has fallen in love during his absence. The creature will have, however, to deal with me before she shall touch a tip of his fingers. Fool! to think that *I* should so lightly and sentimentally part with the power over his future which I command."

Then, with her set, vacant smile, she proceeded to the chamber of Wilfred's mother.

In the meanwhile, he followed with his eyes the elegant form of his cousin as she floated from the room, and he muttered, as he, too, quitted the apartment with a hasty step—

"That is a good thing well over. Belle will never be my wife, that I feel."

With a rather remarkable celerity he made his way to the stables. There he found horses and even grooms in plenty, and selecting a handsome hack, he ordered it to be saddled, and a groom to attend him.

After they had ridden a mile or so, he turned abruptly to the groom and said—

"Have you ever heard of Mark Jarrett's—"

He stopped as abruptly as he had commenced. The word "Daisy" remained in his throat.

He had an unconscious impression that it was not exactly a question to put to his groom, and that he should feel mortally affronted if the man were to repeat it impertinently, or even lightly.

The servant, however, touching the brim of his hat with his forefinger, supplied another word.

"Grange, sir!" he exclaimed. "Mark Jarrett's Grange! Everybody about here knows Mark Jarrett's Grange!"

"Why?" demanded Wilfred, laconically, almost recoiling from the expected answer.

The man laughed.

"Can't exactly say why, sir," he returned, titilating the short hair behind his ear with the forefinger of his right hand. "He is a very odd kind of old chap, with one o' the crackest studs in the county. Yet for all that, the Grange is a bawful wild place."

"Where is it?" demanded Wilfred, rather curtly.

"Over they woods yonder," he answered, pointing to a closely-wooded ridge of hills southward. "It is down in Devil's Hollow, sir, just by the source of the Hazlebrook, which comes up with a bust out o' the earth, like a plug up in London when there's a house a fire. It is a dismal-looking place, and no mistake."

"How far is it?" asked Wilfred, with affected carelessness.

"Between four and five miles," was the answer.

"Strange. I never heard of it before," he soliloquized, rather audibly.

"Werry odd, indeed, sir," pursued the groom. "Why, at the hunt, sir, every tongue's got on the tip of it Mark Jarrett's—"

"I shall not want you any longer to-day, Tibshelf," interrupted Wilfred, abruptly. "You may return to the Priors."

The man stared for an instant at him with surprise; but, accustomed to obey, made his obeisance, turned his horse, and galloped away.

Wilfred sat motionless until the man was out of sight, and then, with contracted brows and compressed lips, exclaimed—

"There is a strange mystery in all this, which disturbs and depresses me. I will unravel it. I will at once to Mark Jarrett's Grange and investigate it. At least, I shall there see Mark Jarrett's Daisy. Wondrous, sweet-faced Mark Jarrett's Daisy!"

CHAPTER III.

SEARCHING FOR THE WILD FLOWER.

"Over they woods yonder" was, as Wilfred found, a very distracting direction. In some districts in the wooded south of England the country is almost impracticable to horsemen. It is very hilly, arable where not wooded, and all the arable land is under cultivation.

The fields of grain, and also the pasture lands, are protected by very high hedgerows and tall gates; but there are lanes—and lanes.

Not a few of these lanes are narrow, rough, devious, overarched by trees of all kinds, and, in fact, seem to be the subways to the Land's End: for, like their tribe in Devonshire, they wind in every direction, and promise to end nowhere.

Another element of distraction in them is, that the unfortunate pedestrian or equestrian who attempts to thread one, under the insane anticipation that it will lead him to the destination he is aiming at, never meets therein a living creature, save birds, and insects, and loathsome crawling things, which stare at him with large eyes, and appear to regard him as an object to be crawled over and drained of his blood and marrow.

Into one of these narrow, dismal, dreary, exasperating lanes, Wilfred, with a view to a "short cut," precipitated himself.

After he had galloped, and trotted, and walked, and ambled, and galloped again, then cantered, then walked, and at last crawled up a muddy, deep, rutted steep wall of a hill, he found himself in a spot exactly similar in every inch to that he had already traversed. The way before looked precisely like the way behind: there was the same kind of acclivity—at least the part that could be seen—back and front, the same sandy banks on each side, crowned with knotted and entangled brambles, bushes, beech and oak, elm and lime trees—the same everything, and an outlet nowhere.

And not a Christian or heathen soul visible or within hail; not a sound even, except the chirruping of birds, the rustling of leaves, and the buzzing of insects. Anything more lonely, solitary, depressing and demoralizing could not, it seemed to him, possibly be required.

Demoralizing, for when he pulled up at the top of a hill and looked down the steep incline—steep, dark, gloomy descent before him—he boiled over with rage, and with a furious burst submitted his opinion of all such lanes, couched in the very strongest language, to the air, the fluttering leaves, and whistling birds—to the awful insects, to the world at large, but to ears that heeded and understood them not.

To go back to the place whence he came was to have accomplished nothing: to go forward appeared, so far as his secret object went, to be to accomplish about as much.

After some hot and angry rumination he flattended his hat on his brow, set his lips together, and muttered—

"Fate seems resolved to spite, annoy, and vex me. Was there ever such an infernal natural labyrinth as this beastly, tortuous lane, which began unexpectedly, and seems as if it defies expectation as to where it will end? But there is an end to all things, and there must be to this. Besides, I am not to be so easily defeated after having formed a determination, and I will find Jarrett's Grange, and I will see Jarrett's Daisy. Strange that I should feel an uneasy presentiment that she is in some way connected with my destiny—with my future happiness—that in seeking her I am hazarding it."

He paused for an instant, checking his speech with a kind of startled expression flitting across his features. Then as suddenly he snapped his fingers, made an impatient gesture with his hand, and giving his horse the spur, went down the hill at full gallop.

As he swept round a corner at the end of the descent, he found abruptly offered to his choice "other" three lanes, as a commercial man would say, each diverging in a different direction, yet still onward.

But there was no guide-post at either, and which led to Jarrett's Grange, and, therefore, to Jarrett's Daisy, was the hardest of nuts for him to crack. While he sat, speechless and aghast, examining their respective gloomy entrances, he suddenly perceived the dusky form of a man advancing with a quick, springy step, along one of them.

Wilfred waited for him impatiently: and as he neared him, the man, observing him, suddenly stood still, as if amazed at finding a horseman there, and dubious whether the fact would prove to his advantage.

A sunbeam, streaming through a space amid the branches of a straggling elderberry, fell on this man, and enabled Wilfred to take a rather elaborate survey of him.

Not that, under ordinary circumstances, he would have done so; but there was much in the man's aspect and appearance that struck him forcibly.

He had the look and garb of an undergamekeeper, but not exactly the manner. He was tall—nearly six feet in height—rather bony than brawny, yet giving an impression that he possessed great physical strength. He was straight as a sapling, and there was a kind of natural grace in his motion which scarcely belonged to one who had been born to the plough or to the woods.

He possessed very handsome features, brilliant black eyes, and shining, curly black hair, although it was kept short, the curls clinging closely to his head, and his complexion was not only as brown, but had very much of the peculiar hue and tan of a gypsy.

He carried a double-barrelled gun loosely in the hollow of his arm; but there was a slight, uneasy movement of the hands, as if he would bring it to his shoulder to an aim at a moment's notice.

Wilfred, indeed, as he hastily scanned the man's face and form in the beam of bright sunlight, did not feel favorably impressed by him, and instinctively grasped his hunting-whip tightly.

He did not exactly shudder, as if some ideal enemy were marching over his future grave, wherever that might, in the time to come, be prepared for him; but he conceived a singular dislike to this strange man, as if he felt that they should meet frequently again, and always as enemies.

Nevertheless, he beckoned to the man to approach him, and the latter complied, but with a cautious, reluctant manner.

And an expression, too, on his features as if he had for the first time encountered one who would prove to be the most dangerous foe he should have to deal with in his life, natural or unnatural.

Their eyes met, and settled fixedly, each on the other's. It was strange how rapid, searching, eager was the scrutiny of both.

It was as if each endeavored, by one piercing glance, to penetrate through the brain of the other, down to the most secret recesses of the heart—as if each desired to become acquainted with the most carefully concealed intents of the other.

Yet, on the part of Wilfred, any such object was, on the face of it, quite absurd, and apparently it was scarcely less irrational on the other side.

A slight flush tinted Wilfred's cheek as he became conscious that he was the object of a searching examination, and with a haughty expression on his face, he said—

"Can you direct me, my man, to Mark Jarrett's Grange?"

The man's brow instantly fell; his bright, piercing eye once more raced over Wilfred's face, attire, horse—all.

Knitting his brows, he said, shortly—

"I can! Why?"

"Because I wish to proceed thither," was the rejoinder, uttered in a half-angry tone.

"What for?" demanded the man, eagerly and curiously.

"How dare you ask me that question?" exclaimed Wilfred, raising his eyebrows, and speaking irately.

The man looked for a moment confused, and even instinctively raised his hand to the brim of his hat with a gesture of respect.

"I beg pardon, sir," he said, a little deprecatingly—not much; "but Mark Jarrett is a very strange old man, and is not easy to be seen by strangers. I thought—"

"I must trouble you not to think for me," interposed Wilfred, sharply. "I ask you only for a simple piece of information—whether you can direct me to Mark Jarrett's Grange. You answer that you can. Therefore, direct me; or, if you refuse, I can find my way without your help. I have no doubt."

The man raised his eyes furtively to him, and in a dogged tone replied—

"I have no call to refuse you, any more than I have to oblige you—only it seems odd that you don't know Mark Jarrett's Grange. Everybody knows it."

"Except me—I do not," responded Wilfred, with an impatient laugh. "If I did, I should not be delaying my time to put the question to you. Where is it?"

The man jerked his right thumb over his shoulder.

"This lane leads into Jarrett's Wood," he turned, sullenly. "You will find the gate locked, but you can leap it with that hunter easily—and about a quarter of a mile on you will see a bridle-path. Take that which leads to the right: it will lead you to the four-acre pasture. Go through it—only ware hawk of the bull in it—and when you've leaped the five-barred gate at the entrance to it, follow a road which leads down to the Devil's Hollow. You'll see Jarrett's Grange then quick enough."

Wilfred put his hand to his waistcoat-pocket, and drew out some silver; but the man raised his hand, and showing his teeth with a kind of snarl, he said, harshly—

"Keep your money—I want none of it."

With that, he raised the barrels of his gun to his shoulder, and walked onward past Wilfred, with a quick, easy swing, but at the same time eyeing him askance until he had got many steps beyond him.

Wilfred, rather perplexed by the man's behavior, followed him with his eyes for a moment, and then, giving his horse the rein, set forth at a brisk trot down the lane to which the man had pointed.

The sound of his horse's hoofs had not died away ere the man abruptly halted, slid his gunstock to the ground, placed both hands upon the muzzle, and resting his chin upon them, he turned his dark, glittering eyes in the direction Wilfred had taken.

"He's a Rokeby, I'll be sworn," he soliloquized. "Father's eyes and forehead—his mother's skin. A Rokeby, for my life! I have never seen him before; but I know the breed only too well. What can he want with Mark Jarrett? More likely he has heard of the Daisy, and has ridden over to see if she is a flower worth the plucking. If he has—if he has, I would not give one of the coins he intended to fling to me for his life. I can use a bullet instead of shot, if it be needed, and either of these barrels will carry as true as a rifle. I'll go after him. It will be well for me, I do not doubt, to know his game. If wrong and shame to Daisy be it, he must beware of me."

Throwing his gun again into the hollow of his arm, and abandoning the purpose which had brought him thus far, he followed the road he had directed Wilfred to take.

In the meanwhile, the latter made the best use of the information he had received, and had not ridden far before he observed the gate guarding an entrance to the wood which the stranger had mentioned. His horse observed it as quickly, pricked up his ears, increased his pace, and on reaching it, leaped it like a deer.

It was not long ere he struck the bridle-path, and as he followed the directions he had received, he mused—

"The fellow has thus far not misled me," he thought; "but I have conceived a strange, impatient, almost malignant dislike to him, the most remarkable part of which is that I feel it in spite of knowing that he is a person beneath my notice. I have never even seen him before. That is—let me see—where have I seen a face like his? Let me think! No—I cannot recollect. Still, the face is in some way almost familiar to me. He is a dangerous fellow, I am certain—and the sooner such a doubtful subject is removed from the neighborhood of so fair a flower as Daisy, the better for her. I must turn my attention to this."

The equity of this was not quite clear, for the right of the "doubtful subject" to be in the neighborhood of even so fair a flower as Daisy was, in all probability, as good as his; but then he took his view from a point which men mostly spring to "when a lady's in the case." It was enough that she had created upon him a marked and favorable impression. Therefore, that any other of his sex, gentle or simple, should presume to approach her, even within eye-shot, was not to be tolerated.

So, unmindful that the object of his suspicious mistrust had actually directed him to the garden where Mark Jarrett's Daisy bloomed, he formed a resolution that he would not permit him to hover near, much less dwell in the same locality.

And then it occurred to him that he had not the slightest pretext for intruding himself upon Mark Jarrett, or upon Mark Jarrett's Daisy, or even upon the sanctity of the Grange itself. This was slightly embarrassing, yet he did not draw rein as he passed out of the wood into the four-acre gap, and thence down into the Devil's Hollow.

He found this to be a wild, gloomy, dreary ravine, covered with an immense entanglement of dark foliage, in which rose the source of the Hazelbrook, and which at once spreading to a sheet of water approached the dimensions of a lake.

It was embowered, and as it were embanked, in massive foliage, lay like a pool, and was as silent as the grave.

Immediately above the trees he perceived a number of pointed bell-shaped roofs, each surmounted with a vane, and each blacker and more sombre in its aspect than the trees beneath, which were as motionless as if they were carved in ebony.

That unattractive and dreary pile of buildings was, no doubt, Mark Jarrett's Grange.

As he gazed at its mournful appearance with something of the wonder and distaste with which he would have looked upon a foreign post-house, he was startled, and almost unseated by the sharp explosion of a gun, for his horse made a bound several feet from the ground, and began to plunge affrightedly.

The sound appeared to proceed from one of the wings of the building; and before he had recovered his control of the steed he bestrode, his blood was chilled, and ran back to his heart, for a wild scream, a woman's shriek—emanating from the same spot, pierced his ear. It was followed by another and another in rapid succession.

His heart beat tumultuously, and perceiving a gate, which apparently led into grounds adjoining the house, he made his horse clear it at a bound, and galloped forward to ascertain the cause of this mystery, which he, of course, at once identified in some incoherent way with Mark Jarrett's Daisy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A SUPPOSED VOLCANO.—Has this country a volcano in active operation, is one of the questions just now asked. There is a report that Mount Hood, in Oregon, is in a state of eruption, but the story is regarded as doubtful. This peak is over 18,000 feet high, and was once an active volcano, but the smoke now said to be issuing from its cone is believed to be half-congealed steam from the hot springs known to be located at the summit. Were so high a mountain in active eruption it would be a sight that tourists would go many thousands of miles to see, and hotel-keepers near by therefore have an interest in making the smoke as big as possible.

A female suffragist at Washington, angry that Congress turns a deaf ear to her appeals, threatens to put "five hundred female orators into the field" to accomplish her object.

The New York Herald calls the President of the Cruelty to Animals Society in that city the "philobiple Bergh."

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Punch calls the rainbow Noah's Arc.

A play-bill—Shakspeare.

A Des Moines damsel having offended a young man at a leap-year ball, he threatened to send his big sister to demand an apology.

Kid gloves have now got up to 18 buttons.

They used to call a lady's man a beau. They call him now a beer, sometimes.

It is fashionable among the visitors to the baths in Wilbad, Wurtemberg, to wear a thermometer in their hats.

Mr. Artemus Ward was on a slow California train, and he went to the conductor and suggested that the cow-catcher was on the wrong end of the train. "For," said he, "you will never overtake a cow, you know, but if you'd put it on the other end, it might be useful, for now there's nothin' on earth to hender a cow from walkin' right in and bitin' the folks!"

A young lady requested to be released from her marriage engagement, on the ground that when she contracted it she believed her lover a "duck," but has since found him to be a goose.

A woman at Petersburg, Va., has become deranged from investing in lottery tickets and failing to draw prizes.

A Baltimore exquisite was much horrified at finding that he had entered a large ball-room with his pants rolled up.

A Western editor recently penned an article about Alexis, calling him the "noble Russ." One of the compositors made the article read "noble Kuss."

"Come, sheer off," as the sheep said to the man who was cutting off her wool.

The Danbury News says: A Danbury German is named Wachseinleigenshamel. How would you like to stand on a back stoop, with the thermometer 11 degrees below zero, and call that in to breakfast?

Barnum has now four cannibals in his museum, two men, a woman, and a girl, and to drop in there about dinner time and see them all sit down to a boiled missionary on the half-shell is very amusing.

At Troy, N. Y., a man who had been insane for over two years caught the small-pox, and, after the usual run of the disease, recovered not only his health but his senses. Has G. F. Train ever been vaccinated?

"Is the doctbur in?" "No. Will you leave your name?" "An' go home widout un?"

George Eliot says: "There are men who don't mind being kicked blue if they can only get talked about."

The Western stock raisers are seriously contemplating the domestication of the buffalo. It is claimed that by training they can be made as useful as the ox.

Gold bracelets are coming into fashion two or three inches broad.

Messrs. Barefoot and Shoemaker happened to get on the same jury in a Pennsylvania town lately.

The "coughing hoss" in the Indian name for a locomotive.

Judge Jeffreys, pointing with his cane at a prisoner before him, observed, "There is a great rogue at the end of this stick." The man replied—"At which end, my lord?"

A story is told of a Philadelphia banker who writes a hand somewhat worse than Dr. Greeley, and after being bothered extremely by an insurance agent, sent him a note warning him not to seek him again. The agent presented the note at the bank, and was paid $5000, the teller thinking it was a check for that amount.

A new and careful bridegroom in Cleveland, kept the wedding ring in his mouth during the first of the ceremony, so that he could find it when the proper moment arrived. He mumbled along all right until the minister winked at him, as a hint to produce the ring, when in his nervousness he swallowed it, and there being no stomach-pump on hand, he was stood on his head, by three groomsmen, to recover the "golden pledge."

A Frenchman said of Shakspeare, "Ven you find anyzing you no understan', it is always someting fine."

A man in Memphis, desiring to see the Grand Duke, took off his coat, and carried a large Saratoga trunk on his shoulders up stair, thus evading the police, who had strict orders to keep all strangers out of the Peabody House. After carrying a two-hundred-pound trunk up two flights of stairs, he didn't see the Grand Duke, and found somebody had stolen his coat.

By putting bottles of brandy inside turkeys, and then freezing the turkeys, a brisk smuggling business was carried on near Ogdensburg during the holiday season.

A lady wished a seat. A portly, handsome gentleman brought one and seated the lady.

"Oh, you're a jewel!" said she.

"Oh no," replied he. "I'm a jeweller; I have just set the jewel."

While the baggage of the Grand Duke's party was at the railroad station at Atlanta, Georgia, a lady of uncertain age watched her opportunity, embraced and kissed one of the ducal trunks, and snipped off a piece of the leather strap, a souvenir of the "sweet Prince."

Samuel Goodridge, Salem, Mass. One hundred and five. Without glasses. Since Washington. Sawed four cords. Wife, ninety-seven. Baby, eighty-one.

"Small beginnings often lead to startling results." For example: Begin with a single letter, say *d*, follow it with an *evil* word, and lo! the *devil* appears.

An editor out in Cleero, Indiana, on taking charge of the New Era, greets his readers with this salutatory: "It is the fashion for an editor to write a long introduction on taking charge of a paper, but as we are well acquainted with nearly every man in the county, it is only necessary to say that we intend to do as we please, and announce that our motto is, two almighty dollars a year in advance."

The Chicago Post has a female editor whose extraordinary abilities were first manifested, according to the Woman's Journal, when she was sent out to write up a slight street car difficulty, and returned with a full report, to which was added a complete history of vehicular locomotion from the days of Hector and Troy.

When one sits unceremoniously in a pool of slush in the middle of the street, what happiness it is to observe the pleasure your action gives to all who witness it!

Dr. Livingstone's son, Oswell, only twenty years old, is going out to Africa, like Japhet, in search of his father. He is himself a native of Africa, having been born in the neighborhood of Lake N'gami.

Count Larendan, a wealthy Parisian, was killed at his own door recently by a chimney-pot, which was blown from a neighboring house and fell on his head. His father was killed in the same manner in 1850. It evidently runs in the family.

Odd indeed are some of the effects of the Franco-Prussian war. We must now number among them the loss of *pates de foie gras*. That delicious dyspepsia-giving mixture is under the ban. The geese of Strasburg are to have a respite. Henceforth disease of the liver will be less assiduously cultivated among those unhappy fowl. Since the German occupation the Parisians believe the pies are poisoned, and no longer eat them. Unhappy Parisians! Happy geese!

Much of the false hair sold to ladies is cut from the heads of convicts and dead people.

California has appointed a "State tree planter," whose business it is to be to plant trees wherever the growth of timber is possible in the State.

SONNET.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Perhaps through life 'twill not be always so—
But now, in my youth, the world seems to abound,
With things so beautiful, I do feel crowned
At times with joy as great as Heaven can know.
Ay, there is very blackness oft to fright:
But at the sight of sunrise bright and strong,
Or sound of some sweet strain of waltz or song
Made precious by a ball-room's wild delight;
Or when I watch with eyes that may seem bold
The passing of fair women in the street,
Two arm in arm perhaps, with cheeks that meet
The air and flush, and tresses, brown or gold;
My soul springs upward with such ecstacy,
I wonder that so much of joy can be.

RUPERT.

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS;

OR,

A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE RETREAT INVADED.

Day had not long broken ere the escape of Pete was discovered. The opening made by his exertions in the corner of the roof was observed by one of the outlaws, and the door instantly opened only to discover that the bird had flown.

The commotion caused by this discovery had been that heard by the escaped prisoner in his lair, which had caused his hasty flight through brake and briar.

A rapid consultation was held by the band of outlaws as to what had best be done in view of this unforeseen occurrence. Most of them could see no possible danger in the event, as the boy had appeared too stupid to take any perilous observations. He had been brought there in the night, without the chance of observing localities. He had escaped in the night, and had probably made such haste from the spot, that by daylight he would be quite unable to retrace his steps. Their pursuers knew already that they had some hiding place, so that the boy's report would not add to their information.

"All that is durned nice," said Jim Budd, who had listened silently to their remarks, "but ef yer take that boy for a fool, it's a mighty bad lay you're on. Look hyar! Fools ain't smart enough to cut sich holes as that with a pen-knife. He's jest been playing possum, an' ef we don't get him back, our goose is cooked. He can't be far away, an' thar's only three or four paths out of this. So let's chase him down."

The wisdom of this advice was too evident not to be at once acted upon, and in a few minutes four of the outlaws had passed through the belt of trees, and were in full pursuit by the various routes, quite overlooking in their haste the slight disorder in the spot where the boy had slept.

Middleton, who had slept somewhat later than the rest, now made his appearance, inquiring the cause of the uproar. On hearing it his annoyance was much greater than that of the members of the gang. He had a much higher opinion of the shrewdness of Pete than they had gained.

"Have you any other good hiding-place?" he inquired.

"Yes, some that's not bad."

"Good or bad, we'll have to leave here if the boy escapes. And we will need to start soon, before the hunt is commenced again."

"Don't yer think they've guv it up by this time?"

"No. They are too determined for that."

"See here, Mr. Middleton," said Jim Budd. "We've kept our bargain with you, hain't we?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, you'd best git the gal outer this party soon. What's ther' use foolin'? Jest let us handle our dough. Make the gal marry you, ef she won't do it kindly, an' git her outer this. We ain't afford to be chased this way."

"But how is the matter to be hurried? I am anxious enough to have it settled."

"Make her say yes, an' I'll bring yer a preacher."

"Can you?"

"Hain't I said so? You kin durn soon splice it ef yer ready."

Middleton walked away lost in thought.

At this moment Nellie emerged from the open door of her prison, unable longer to endure the stifling air within. She had not taken many steps before Middleton joined her. There was a triumphant expression on her face, which puzzled him. The truth was she had heard the morning discussion, which had been carried on in rather loud tones, and knew that her follower had escaped. Knowing, as she did, his shrewdness and agility, she was confident he would not be recaptured.

Mindful of his advice of the day before, she met her companion's advances with a good humor that surprised him. Taking advantage of her cordiality, he returned to the subject of his suit, pressing it with an energy that made her speedily regret her complaisance.

Her change of tone but added to his importunity. When at length she plainly declared that he was troubling her with an unpleasant subject to which she had already given a final answer, he rapidly changed from entreaties to threats, hinting, in language not to be misunderstood, that force should succeed persuasion unless she immediately gave him a favorable answer.

"One might well suppose, John Middleton," she indignantly replied, "that you would not take the trouble to consult my inclinations in any matter, judging from your past behavior. You have torn me violently from my home, incarcerated me in the den of a gang of outlawed murderers, and for what? That you might press me with a suit hateful to my ears. And then you hypocritically assume a deference to my inclinations. You had far better proceed in the tone you have just assumed, and not supplement your past outrages with hypocrisy. Where are the proofs of this love you dare assail my ear with? Restore me to my home, address me with the humble entreaties which a true gentleman uses in declaring his affection, and—"

"And be treated with scorn and contumely, as I have already been. You appear to forget that I have tried that means. Mine you shall be, and I now woo you in the fashion of a different age from this. Girl, there is no lie in my declaration of love. My violence is but the result of a despised affection."

"And there is no falsehood in my declaration of hate. I loathe, despise you more than I do the worm which I cast with a shudder from my hand. Death itself would be a fate a thousand times preferable to the despicable union you would force upon me."

"My wife you shall be, willing or not. It is past the time for half measures. I must have your final answer to-day. To-morrow I will not wait for an answer. I will use more decisive means of overcoming your refusal."

"Take my answer now," she cried, turning from him with an abhorrence too deep for words marked in every line of her features. "Before consenting to your base demand, I would give my hand in marriage to the meanest of this wretched crew, your worthy companions; ay, on my knees beg of him to accept me, as a happy fate compared with the unutterable misery of being linked to a monster like you."

The harsh and fierce answer that rushed to his lips was suddenly interrupted.

The half-dozen of the Budds remaining, hearing a sound in the direction of the entrance path, had gone in that direction, expecting to meet some of their returning scouts.

When within twenty feet of the spot, the foremost of them stopped, suspicious of something wrong.

Instantly, from the covert of the leaves, blazed several flashes of light, followed by the keen report of a volley of rifle shots. Two of the outlaws were stretched on the ground, one dead, one badly wounded, while, with a shout of exultation, the band of citizens, headed by Howard and Solomon, broke into the enclosure, Pete, with a wild yell, preceding them.

The outlaws, frightened at this sudden attack, waited not to use their weapons in reply, but turned and ran at full speed across the enclosure.

Middleton, who had stood half stupified by this surprise, was roused to a sense of his danger by their rapid flight. The citizens, convinced that they guarded the only entrance to the enclosure, halted to reload, following the flying outlaws with scornful shouts.

One of the men, a vigorous, burly mulatto, stopped beside him, exclaiming, with a fierce oath: "Ef they wants this gal, let them cotch us!"

Lifting Nellie in his muscular arms as though she were a feather, he continued his flight, unimpeded by his burden. Middleton followed with a rapid step.

The exultation of their pursuers was quickly changed to dismay as they saw the foremost fugitive dash against and disappear in the thicket, rapidly followed by the others.

"My God!" cried Howard, leaping forward with the spring of a panther, "they have another path."

All followed with equal rapidity. Pete, who had skirted the wood on his entrance, followed Middleton through the passage almost within reach.

On leaving the winding pathway, whose outer screen of bushes had been broken down in the flight, Howard found himself directly on the banks of the creek, which was here but a few feet wide. The fugitives were already disappearing in the opposite bushes, with the exception of one, who had just climbed to the bank.

Howard's rifle leaped to his shoulder, an instant his eye glanced along the sights, the next a sharp report was mingled with a yell from the ruffian, who fell headlong forward.

Pete, who had hurled himself into the water and rapidly swam across the stream, at the same moment emerged upon the bank and disappeared in the wake of the fugitives.

Without a moment's hesitation, Howard, his blood now kindled with the frenzy of passion, leaped into the water. Its deepest part reached only to his waist, and in a minute he was on the opposite bank. The others immediately followed. Solomon unfortunately lost his rifle in the muddy bottom of the stream. He had no time to stop in search of it, with the enemy in full flight before them, but trusted to chance to procure him another.

The next instant the thick bushes opposite swallowed up pursuers and pursued.

But the fugitives were already lost to sight in the close thicket. More accustomed than their pursuers to the treacherous soil of the swamp, and acquainted with every avenue, they made rapid progress where the others labored onward with difficulty, oppressed with the yielding soil and the dense vines and bushes. In their haste, too, they soon lost sight of the track made through the brush by the fugitives, and rushed onward at random in the general direction of flight.

One of the farmers, who was noted for his skill with the rifle and his knowledge of woodcraft, leaving the others slightly in the rear, reached a comparatively open space just in time to see Middleton, the ruffian who carried the prisoner, and another of the outlaws, entering a yet denser thicket beyond. Jim Budd had disappeared. On the skirt of the thicket, not ten paces from the fugitives, appeared the slight form of Pete, stealing along half concealed by leaves. His light weight enabled him to skim rapidly over the soft surface of the morass.

The farmer in question stopped and raised his rifle with a movement that seemed to combine deliberation and rapidity, and bent his eye to the sights.

"Hold!" cried Howard, in an agony of apprehension. "You are aiming at the wrong man! You will kill Nellie!"

Solomon caught Howard's arm, which was stretched forward to grasp the marksman.

"Let him alone!" he cried. "Do you want to spile his aim? He's a dead shot."

Heedless of the confusion behind him the man had been taking unusually careful aim, and the last words of Solomon were lost in the report of the rifle.

The burly villain, who bore Nellie clasped firmly in his arms, was seen to bend like a forest oak struck by a thunderbolt. Shot through the knee, his legs bent beneath him, and he fell prone to the ground just as Middleton caught his burden from his arms, and rushed forward, preceded by his single companion.

"Four winged out of six, by the holer!" exclaimed the marksman. "After them, lads, he can't run fast with that load."

But rapidly as the pursuit was continued, the thicket appeared to have swallowed up the fugitives. No trace of their route appeared, the spongy soil leaving no mark of footsteps, while the elastic bushes brushed aside in their passage had sprung again into their places.

It was now they had reason to regret the loss of the dog, which had deserted them on the other side, on the track of one of the scouts who had started in pursuit of Pete.

Disarming the wounded man as they passed, and leaving one of their number to mount guard over him, the pursuit was continued with great rapidity, considering the difficulties of the way. These had become so great that the party in a short time separated, each portion pressing forward rapidly as possible by the most available route.

Solomon wandered off in a path by himself, so eager in the search that he had gone some distance before recollecting that he was unarmed. Feeling that he would be unable to defend himself, much less to engage in offensive operations, in his present condition, it occurred to him that the wounded man might have been possessed of a rifle, though he could not remember seeing any where he had fallen. He immediately turned with the intention of deciding this, or else of recovering his own weapon from the bed of the stream.

But return was not so easy. After breaking his way for some distance through the bushes, and wading through several places in which the water rose above his knees, he at length found himself pursuing a path, harder and better defined than any he had before found.

He had gone but a short distance before the sudden breaking of the sun from a cloud showed him that he was in the wrong direction. At the same instant, however, he saw familiar signs in the path, and recognized it as that he had pursued when on his way to rescue Howard from his enemy on a previous occasion.

A thought occurring to him he dashed onward in this path with an assured step.

A short distance in advance, in the direct line of the ill defined pathway, rose a gigantic cypress, its massive, buttressed trunk hiding the view beyond.

Passing this obstacle he came suddenly on the stalwart figure of Jim Budd, who was proceeding in the opposite direction, and seemed equally startled in meeting him.

Not ten paces separated the two antagonists, who glared on each other with eyes in which surprise quickly yielded to passion. The outlaw saw at a glance that his enemy was unarmed, and a look of savage exultation crossed his face, as he exclaimed:

"Sol Muddle, blast me ef it ain't! It's my turn now."

He leveled his rifle with the quick, assured motion of an old hunter, but his wary antagonist, without a word, sprang fiercely upon him, thrusting aside the muzzle of the weapon and closing with him on the instant.

A desperate struggle ensued. In the strife for the possession of the weapon it was discharged and hurled to the ground. Arm linked in arm, the two stalwart men strove with all their strength to force each other back, each keenly on the watch for some chance to fling his foe to the ground.

Breathing hard, and glaring like tigers into each other's eyes, the wrestle for life or death continued, minute after minute passing without an advantage to either party. Budd bore a knife in his belt, but the fierce grasp of his foe gave him no chance to draw it. The wet ground yielded in their fierce struggles till the oozing water rose above their ankles. This slippery foothold rendered their positions more difficult to maintain, and at length, Solomon's right foot slipped in the ooze. His powerful antagonist took instant advantage of this, flinging his whole weight upon him. In an instant the two were prostrate on the ground, the outlaw on the top.

At the same instant, unheard by either antagonist, the bay of a hound sounded in the distance. The bloodhound had struck a new scent.

The wrestle was resumed on the ground with all its former vigor, Solomon desperately striving to turn his antagonist. But the yielding ground on which he lay gave no hope of his succeeding in his efforts.

Budd, on the contrary, exerted himself powerfully to retain his advantage, and, releasing one hand, he grasped his foe by the forehead, and sought with all his strength to press his head into the oozy soil.

Solomon struggled with the desperation of one who knew that life depended on his muscles, but the morass yielded inch by inch to his weight and that of his antagonist, and he felt the water gradually rising till it entered his ears, till it flowed over his forehead, till it wet his closed lips, his dilated nostrils alone remaining above the deadly element.

Yet, with the vigor of a gladiator, he strove still, clasping his enemy with arms rigid as iron bars. In a minute more his whole head would have been under water and the deadly element have replaced the breath of life in his nostrils. A brief, unspoken prayer rose from his heart. A last effort lifted his head about an inch from its oozy bed, but his foe, with set lips and unyielding hand, continued his cruelly powerful pressure, his ferocious eyes gleaming with the delight of a wild beast.

At this critical moment a slight rush sounded in the path behind them, and with a vigorous spring a large dark body rose in the air, and lit with a crushing weight on the back of the outlaw.

There was a new element in the battle. The teeth of the bloodhound were fixed, like knives, in the shoulder of the prostrate ruffian.

Borne down by the weight of this new antagonist, Budd released his grasp of his foe, and rolled over on the ground, Solomon taking instant advantage of the diversion to spring to his feet. For a minute the two wild beasts rolled together on the ground. Then Budd, having drawn his knife, gave a powerful lunge over his back that pierced the side of the hound, penetrating to its heart.

The dead animal rolled off to one side, and the victor, grasping the rifle that lay beneath him, rose to his feet. Fearful of another trial of strength with the unyielding muscles of his foe, Solomon dashed off at full speed, followed by Budd, who loaded as he ran.

In a few moments the fugitive emerged on the dry, island-like space, on which before he had found Howard prostrate under this very antagonist.

Rushing across it without a pause, he entered the narrow path opposite, and feeling with his hand in the opening of a hollow tree, drew out the rifle he had hidden there the previous month.

It was but the work of a moment to try the barrel, and to force into it a cartridge. Capping the piece, he stopped back to the open space on whose opposite side Budd had just appeared. Both leveled their rifles with hasty speed, but Solomon had an instant's advantage in the surprise of his antagonist in finding him armed. The balls sped nearly together, that of Solomon passing through the brain of his foe, while the death pang twitched the arm of the other and sent his ball into the tree tops above. Jim Budd reeled and fell, a dead man.

CHAPTER XXXII.

CONCLUSION.

While this tragedy was enacting Howard continued in full pursuit of his flying foe, burning with the passionate desire for revenge, which was mingled with fear that some harm might happen to his betrothed. Two or three of the party followed him, the others having taken other directions of pursuit.

Middleton had evaded them for the moment, but they felt sure that he was flying in a straight line to some other hiding place; that they were, therefore, still on his track; and that he could not long distance them with the burden he carried.

But after rending through bushes and wading through morasses with headlong energy for half a mile, without sight of the fugitive, it became evident that he must have eluded them. He could not possibly be still in advance of them with his burden.

The position of the sun too showed them, as it had shown Solomon, that they were deceived in supposing they had kept to a straight line. They were nearly at right angles to their original course. With depressed and saddened heart Howard turned back, bitterly reproaching himself for having lost sight of his betrothed after once having her under his eyes.

It was probable that the fugitives were hidden somewhere between their present position and the point where they had been lost sight of. Middleton's strength could not have long borne the weight of his burden through the difficult passage of the swamp.

Their only hope was to return and make a thorough search of the ground gone over, and particularly of any position that seemed fitted for a hiding place, such as that in which they had already found the foe.

But there were dozens of such places, dense thickets, matted with thorny underbrush, and interlaced with a close net-work of vines, perfectly impassable to their every effort.

By the time they had vainly examined several of these localities, the most of them were so wearied with their long journey over the spongy, treacherous soil, sinking ankle deep at every step, and often wading knee-deep in standing pools, that they were almost unable to proceed further, and would have given up the search but for the determined energy of their leader.

He, insensible to fatigue in the intense preoccupation of his mind, pressed on unyieldingly, hunting keenly in every locality that offered the most remote chance of success. But even his strength began to fail and his energy to flag, when, after dragging his way through a muddy slough round several more thickets, he returned disappointed to his comrades, who, wearied out, were resting on a spot of somewhat firmer consistency.

"No luck yet, Mr. Howard, and all of us about fagged out," said one of these. "I'm afeared they've thrown us off the scent."

Howard seated himself beside them without a word of answer, his face buried in his hands.

"Don't take it so to heart," continued the speaker. "We're not thrown out yet, by a jug full. We know they're somewhere within half a mile of this spot, and we'll bring the whole force here and cut it down, tree by tree, but what we find them."

"I wonder what's become of the little devil of a nigger that led us this morning," said another.

"I saw him full chase after them, and not far behind."

"Talk 'bout de debil, and he appears," cried a shrill, young voice, and Pete leaped into the centre of the circle with a suddenness that made them all start to their feet.

He was an almost unrecognizable spectacle, covered with mud from head to foot, and his clothes rent into tatters, but the boy's eye sparkled with an expression that made them crowd round him in eager curiosity.

"Dere's not a minute to lose," he said. "I's got de ducks in a cage, and you's only got to cut dere wings. Arter me, Mass Howard."

The boy darted forward as if over solid ground, the others following with renewed energy.

He pursued a route a little to the left of that they had followed, and rather more passable.

After proceeding some two hundred yards he stopped in front of a thicket, like, in every respect those they had been examining.

"Dis am de spot. See here!"

Stooping at a point of the thicket that seemed one impenetrable mass of tangled vines, he put aside with his hands the bushes near the ground, and bending under the thick stem of a grape vine that swung about three feet, high he passed into an opening beyond.

All immediately followed and found themselves in a narrow avenue cut through the thicket.

Pete led the way through. The path wound so as to be about ten feet long, its inner extremity opening at an acute angle into a wide cleared space within.

They could readily see this space through the screen of leaves, and Howard, with an exultation that almost burst in a cry of joy from his lips, beheld Nellie leaning in a weary attitude against the trunk of an oak, while a few paces distant stood his enemy, apparently conversing with her.

The single outlaw who still accompanied them, lay stretched on the grass near the entrance.

"Dere's no oder way ob getting out," whispered Pete. "One ob you stay here an' watch de path. Tother two cotch dat feller dere an' tie him; an' you, Mass Howard, go for Simon, whose tother name's John."

They instantly obeyed, without questioning, the boy's suggestion. Two of the men leaped on the prostrate villain, and were in a moment engaged in a fierce struggle with him. The third remained on guard; while Howard, with the speed of an athlete, placed himself beside his betrothed, who with a cry of surprise, and of irrepressible joy leaped into his arms, clasping him with a passionate emotion that for the moment left him at the mercy of his foe.

A vindictive look on the face of Middleton showed that he would not hesitate to take advantage of the opportunity, and to slay him while thus fettered in the arms of love.

Gently but firmly he forced her aside, and faced his foe, clutching his levelled rifle as if eager to send a bullet through the villain's treacherous brain.

"Why should I not kill you as you stand, devil of iniquity?" he hissed through his clenched teeth.

"Because two can play at that game," replied Middleton, coolly.

"Take a chance for your life, then. I cannot slay an unresisting man. I lack your murderous instinct. Is your rifle loaded?"

"Yes."

"Take your position yonder. I will stand here, and may God aid the right."

The position thus assigned Middleton was but a short distance from the passage, and near the men whose struggle was just ending in the binding of the prisoner. Arrived here, instead of pausing, as Howard expected, he made a rapid rush for the path, not seeing the sentinel who stood just within it. Howard's rifle was in a moment at his shoulder, but before he could fire, the quick, sharp report of a pistol sounded from the passage, and Middleton, with a death cry, reeled, clutching at the air, and fell prostrate.

"Dearest," cried Howard, pressing his recovered love to his heart with an emotion that had all the energy of his late pursuit. "You are mine now, mine forever. There lies our enemy; the victim of his own criminal schemes, and my lost bird has found again her cage in my arms."

Nellie was affected too deeply for speech, but the tears of happiness that flowed from her sparkling eyes, gave fitting answer to his impassioned words.

Pete, on his part, was half beside himself with joy, and danced about the ground with such an infinity of capers as would have made the fortune of a clown.

Middleton was not dead, though his wound was mortal. He survived about half an hour and, on the verge of death, affected with a late repentance, confessed to the criminal plot of which he had been accused, its object being to prevent Howard obtaining the information of which he was in search, no matter by what desperate means.

He acknowledged that Nellie was the rightful heir to the property held by his father, that he had had a former knowledge of the Budds, and had employed them to aid him in his schemes.

Thus miserably died a man, with the intellect to have made him a useful member of society, but, unfortunately for himself, with a heart that made him the fitting consort of murderers, and finally brought him to the violent end of which he had sought to make Howard the victim.

There needs but few more words to take leave of the characters whom we have accompanied through so many stormy scenes.

The few unhurt Budds remained at large, and the gang has since been increasing in numbers and power to such an extent, that though the state authorities have lately taken the matter in hand, and offered large rewards for their capture, the robbers appear to be as audacious in their actions as ever.

There is plenty of work yet for our friend Solomon Muddle and many more like him.

The elder Mr. Howard at once instituted a claim for the recovery of Nellie's property. There was no attempt to contest it. The proofs were too strong; and the father of John Middleton, shrinking from the publicity of his son's criminal deeds, and sick at heart with the knowledge of his death, at once gave up the papers, and made full restitution of the estate to the legal heir.

Miss Wilton had finally disappeared. She never again crossed the path of any of our characters.

In the spring of the ensuing year a double marriage took place in Burton. Robert Howard entering into matrimonial bonds with Ellen Whitfield, and Solomon Muddle with Sallie Price, the wedding being followed with such festivities as the quiet country place had never beheld, and which are still remembered as the one great occasion of the neighborhood.

Pete lives with Robert Howard and his wife, at their Richmond home, a few years older than we saw him last, but the happiest, merriest, and shrewdest of his generation, and rich as a king in the favor of all who know of his valuable services.

THE END.

How to See Europe for a Thousand Dollars.

"Frugality" must put his hands in his pocket, determined that not a cent of it shall go for travelling by first-class conveyances. Let him take a second-class passage in a steamer, by which he will get as sure support of life as if he went first-class. He will simply be obliged to eat at the second table, will not be allowed to display his sturdy form on a certain part of the deck, and will have his room in a different, though a perfectly healthy, part of the ship. In this way he will be able to count on about nine hundred dollars clear to be expended in seeing the sights on shore. In the next place, let him leave his big trunks at home. A common carpet-bag, containing a better suit of clothes than he wears every day, some clean linen, and a little medicine, for one hand, and an umbrella for the other, will be all the luggage he can afford to take. Whenever he needs new clothes he can buy them cheaper in Europe than in this country. In going about from place to place in the countries he visits he must frequently walk. This is easily done, on account of the comparative nearness of the places. In all particulars, travelling cheaply in Europe is to be done precisely as it is in this country, by walking whenever one can, or by using only cheap means of conveyance—generally the third class; and by buying only what one eats, and, as a rule, eating only hearty, substantial food, though always enough of it. By this method a healthy young man ought to be able, at the highest estimate, to live for three dollars a day, which would give a clear three hundred days for visiting Great Britain, Germany, and Italy. If he be shrewd, and has some Yankee knack about him, he might lengthen this time; but a fair adherence to these suggestions would certainly enable him to say good-bye to his friends for at least nine months. Walking in Europe is recommended, but not for all countries. In Belgium, for instance, where the railroad fare is the cheapest in the world, and the country flat and uninteresting, it is cheaper to ride, second or third class, from town to town, and the time thus saved can be spent cheaply in notable cities. Pedestrianism is not always economy.—*Brooklyn Union.*

HOW IT WAS DONE.

The conjuror's explanation was a great lesson in "spiritualism." I next asked him to elucidate the trick of writing on the arm. On the occasion of my visit to Mr. Forster, when the raps indicated the second pellet, he required the "spirit" present to write the initials on his bare arm. Mr. Forster placed his arm under the table for a moment, then rested it in front of a lamp burning on the table, and quickly rolled up the sleeve of his coat. The skin was without stain or mark. He passed his hand over it once or twice, and the initials of the names I had written on the second pellet seemed to grow on the arm in letters of crimson. "It's a trick I do every night. It goes with the audience like steam," said the conjuror. "Very simple. Well, suppose a name. What name would you like?" "Henry Clay," I replied. Down went the conjuror's arm under the table. In a few seconds he raised it and exposed the bare forearm without mark upon it. He doubled up his fist tightly so as to bring the muscles of the arm to the surface, and rubbed the skin smartly with his open hand. The letters "H. C." soon appeared upon it in well-defined writing of a deep red color. "There you have it, gentlemen; that's the blood-red writing. Very simple. All you have to do is to take a lucifer-match, and write on your arm with the wrong end of it. If you moisten the skin with a little salt water first, all the better. Then wet the palm of the other hand, rub your arm with it. Send up the muscles and the blood-red writing will come out. It will fade away in less than no time. If you look under the table, you will see that I have a little piece of pointed wood. I can move my arm under that and write the letters without using the other hand. But that's a trick which wants practice. Lor', how I had the Queen of Madagascar with this experiment."—*E. P. Hington's Genial Showman.*

A STRANGE RACE.

An English officer has discovered a curious tribe of people dwelling among the hills of Northern Hindostan, the remains of a once numerous race, but now consisting of less than six hundred souls. They are named Todas, and in their appearance, language and customs differ both from Hindoos and Mahometans. They are tall, athletic, of a light bronze complexion, with large, dark eyes, and features of Roman cast. Their villages consist of a few scattered huts of an oval shape, situated in some secluded spot in the woods or fastnesses of the mountains. The buffalo is the sole possession of the Todas. He cultivates no land, nor engages in commerce. His subsistence is from the milk and meat of the buffalo alone, and the animal enters largely into his religious festivals. The worst trait in the character of this singular people is that, influenced by a barbarous superstition, they destroy most of their female children.

☞ To be a sensualist in a certain kind and to a certain degree is the mark of a pure and youthful nature. To be able to keep a just balance between sense and spirit, and to have the soul welcome frankly all the delicious impulses which flow to it from without, is a good and holy thing. But it must welcome them as the endearments of a wife, not of a harlot. A dryad and a satyr may drink out of the same spring. A poet must be as sensitive as the yielding air, and as pure. To a soul which is truly king of itself, and not a prisoner in its desolate palace, the senses are but keepers of its treasury, and all beautiful things pay their tribute *through* these, and not *to* them.—*J. R. Lowell.*

Vitalize the Hair.

Why does the hair become harsh and dry—why does it fall out—why does it become gray? Simply because the life has gone out of it. The fibres draw sustenance from the scalp as the grass draws aliment from the soil, and when the supply of nutriment is cut off in either case the product withers and dies. At the first symptom of decay, therefore, the naked or half-fed roots of the hair should be refreshed and reinforced with LYON'S KATHAIRON, the only preparation which will nourish the filaments and keep them in a vigorous condition after they have begun to suffer from a deficiency of their natural stimulant. As long as the Kathairon is faithfully used, with a proper degree of friction, morning and evening, so long will it be impossible for the hair to whiten or fall out from the scalp.

A MAN OF A THOUSAND.

CONSUMPTIVE CURED.

DR. H. JAMES, a retired physician, (and by nature a chemist) discovered, while in the East Indies, a certain cure for **Consumption, Asthma, Bronchitis,** and **General Debility,** when his only child, a daughter, was given up to die. His child was cured, and is now alive and well. Desirous of benefitting humanity, he will send the recipe, containing full directions for making this remedy, free, on receipt of two stamps to pay expenses. There is not a single symptom of **Consumption** that it does not at once take hold of and dissipate. Night sweats, peevishness, irritation of the nerves, failure of memory, difficult expectoration, sharp pains in the lungs, sore throat, chilly sensations, nausea at the stomach, inaction of the bowels, and wasting, away of the muscles.

Address CRADDOCK & Co., 1032 Race Street, Philadelphia, Pa., giving name of Saturday Evening Post.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

REDUCTION OF PRICE!

SPLENDID STORIES.

The publishers of THE LADY'S FRIEND have concluded to reduce its price to single subscribers from $2.50 to $2—the prices to Clubs (already very low) remaining the same.

They shall continue to obtain for their readers the very best novelets, stories, poetry, etc., that can be procured, including articles from the gifted pens of Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss A. L. Muzzey, Daisy Ventnor, August Bell, Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, A. M. Dana, Madge Carroll, Emma B. Ripley, Nora Perry, M. C. Fyfe, Ida Rowland, etc., etc., etc.

The following novelets, with the usual variety of short stories, are announced for 1872:

WITHIN THE MAZE;

OR,

LADY ANDINNIAN'S TRIAL.

By MRS. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Dene Hollow," &c.

UNA AND HER LIONS.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming, etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By Mrs. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

ENGRAVINGS!

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character. They embrace beautiful pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections, illustrations of our Novelets and Stories, illustrations of the Fashions, (including cuts from which patterns for almost everything can be ordered at a low price,) illustrations of Ladies' Fancy work, etc.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most fashionable Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth the price of the magazine.

The Most Refined, Beautiful, and Interesting of the Magazines!

In short, THE LADY'S FRIEND aims to be, and its proprietors think it is, the most refined, Beautiful, and Interesting of the Magazines—*being in Cover, Engravings, and Contents just what a lady's magazine should be.*

TERMS—Always in Advance.

One Copy, - - - - - $2.00.
1 Copy of the Lady's Friend ($2) and 1 of The Saturday Evening Post ($2.50), for $4.00.

(*Our club terms are the same as those of that old and popular paper,* THE SATURDAY EVENING POST—*in order that the clubs may be made up of the magazine and paper conjointly when so desired.*)

☞ The magazines or papers in a club will be sent to different Post-offices, if desired.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra,* as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to our order.*

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single Numbers 20 Cts. Specimen Copies (not current numbers) 15 Cts.

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

Cures the worst pains in from one to twenty minutes. Not one hour after reading this advertisement need any one suffer with pain. **Radway's Ready Relief** is a cure for every pain. It was the first and is the only pain remedy that instantly stops the most excruciating Pains, allays Inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application, in from one to twenty minutes, no matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bed-ridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease, may suffer. Price 50 cents.

DR. RADWAY'S
Perfect Purgative Pills.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Bilious Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements, of the Internal Viscera. Warranted to effect a Positive Cure.

Price 25 cents per box. Sold by Druggists.

DR. RADWAY & CO.,
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What Dyspepsia May End In.

Indigestion is not dangerous, say the faculty. Perhaps not in itself, while it remains mere indigestion; but look at the consequences to which it may lead, and often does lead when it becomes a chronic disease. A spark of fire is a small thing. A pressure of the foot will put it out; a breath will extinguish it. Yet it may fire a powder mill, or kindle a flame that will consume a city. In like manner, indigestion may produce gastritis, cancer of the stomach, congestion of the bowels, apoplexy, liver disease, and many other dangerous maladies. Is it not wise, then, to check it in the germ? Nothing is more clearly and indisputably established than that HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS will eradicate dyspepsia in all its stages. The true policy, however, is to extinguish it in the first stages with this wholesome, powerful, and infallible tonic and alterative. It is easier to quench a spark than a flame, and it is easier to cure dyspepsia when it is first developed, than when it has made headway by neglect, and become complicated with other ailments. There is not the shadow of a doubt that the bitters are as directly antagonistic to dyspepsia as water is to fire. There are thousands of cases on record proving this fact. The remedy is safe and agreeable. All the liquors of commerce prescribed as stimulants leave a sting behind. But the sting is taken out of the spirituous basis of this great remedy by vegetable medication, and moreover, the stimulant thus medicated is of exceptional purity. Of all tonics taken as safeguards or remedies for fever and ague, bilious remittents, and other epidemics, it is the only one that can uniformly be depended on. march2-1m

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sends his "**Family Physician**" 80 pages, free by mail to any one. This book is to make any one their own doctor. Remedies are given for Thirty Diseases, which each person can prepare.

Send your direction to Dr. S. S. FITCH & SON, 714 Broadway, New York. may.3-1y

The Sweet, Fixed Oil of the Cocoanut is represented in *Burnett's Cocoaine.*

☞ The cold is so great in Italy this winter that there has been skating at Florence and Naples, for the first time in many years.

☞ A sarcastic young lady says that the most unpleasant things in nature are lovers and pigs.

OUR NEW DEPARTURE!

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

HALF A CENTURY OLD.

ENTIRELY NEUTRAL IN POLITICS

That well-known literary weekly, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, having just completed its half-a-century of existence, has resolved to celebrate the event by

A NEW DEPARTURE.

The size of THE POST has therefore been enlarged fully ONE-THIRD, (containing 48 long columns,) and it is now both the

Largest and Cheapest of the Family Papers!

It will contain Novelets, Illustrated Stories, Sketches, Poetry, Answers to Correspondents, etc., etc., by the

ABLEST WRITERS

that can be procured—including Mrs. Henry Wood, author of "East Lynne," Mrs. Margaret Hosmer, Amanda M. Douglas, Burr Thornbury, Ella Wheeler, August Bell, Clio Stanley, Captain Carnes, Lillie Devereux Blake, "Zig," Mrs. Fanny B. Feudge, Mrs. M. L. S. Burke, Eben E. Rexford, etc., etc., etc. ☞ It will be entirely NEUTRAL in politics.

NEW NOVELETS CONSTANTLY PUBLISHED.

New Novelets and Stories, long and short, are being continually published. Subscriptions, therefore, can begin at almost any time.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

As our enlarged paper will afford us the room, we shall devote about a column in every number to a summary of the most important and interesting news of the week.

TERMS—Always in Advance.

One Copy, - - - - $2.50.
One Copy of the Saturday Evening Post ($2.50) and One of the Lady's Friend ($2,00), for $4.00.

Our *club* terms are the same as those of that beautiful magazine, THE LADY'S FRIEND—in order that the clubs may be made up of the paper and magazine conjointly when so desired—and are as follows:

4 copies,	-	-	-	-	$6.00
8 "	(and one to getter-up of club,)				12.00
14 "	do.	do.	do.	do.	20.00
20 "	do.	do.	do.	do.	28.00
50 "	do.	do.	do.	do.	65.00

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ The papers or magazines in a club will be sent to different Post-offices, if desired.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

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Address H. PETERSON & CO.,
319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.
SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, MAR. 2, 1872.

BACK NUMBERS.

We have still on hand back numbers to the first of the year, containing the early chapters of "The Swamp Outlaws," &c.

Demonstrative Affection.

There is a wide difference of opinion among intelligent and thoughtful persons, as to the value of demonstrative affection. All are agreed that love itself is priceless; that nothing can atone for a cold heart, and that those who neither give nor crave affection are both to be pitied and despised. But how, when and where our love is to be exhibited, how far we are to yield to the natural promptings of the heart, and when to repress them, whether our affections are to gush forth in caresses and endearments, or to be carefully secreted within our own bosoms—these are questions on which every variety of opinion and practice exists. It is impossible on such a subject to lay down any definite rules that should bind all to a uniform mode of action. Much must depend on constitution, temperament and education; yet there are certain principles which underlie the whole subject, and which, if understood and recognized, will guide the conduct and prevent the evils which uncontrolled impulse is sure to produce.

The *sacred* character of a pure and fervent affection, if realized in all its delicacy, will always prevent those *public* displays of its outward manifestation, that are at once revolting to good taste and discourteous to society. There is something too deep and pure in love to open it up to the gaze of the multitude, or to submit it to the smile or sneer of the stranger. Especially is this the case with the love of husband and wife. It is a holy possession, which each should treasure too sacredly to be willing to expose it unreservedly. This suppression of the inner feelings is also due to society, which justly demands that those who partake of social pleasures shall contribute their share to the general happiness. This cannot be the case when the mind is wholly taken up with one individual, and the attention due to many is lavished on one alone. Good taste and kind feeling alike prompt intimate friends and relatives rather to separate when in society, and devote themselves to the pleasure of those around, reserving the special privilege of each other's company to more suitable seasons. There are some who, feeling the propriety of this, run into the other extreme, and treat each other, in society, with seeming neglect. Politeness, attention and respect are always suitable and seemly, even when endearing familiarities are out of place.

While demonstrative affection is unsuitable for public display, we would by no means join in the wholesale denunciations with which some condemn it. There is a kind of false pride which many men are fond of cherishing, and which leads them to conceal under an austere or indifferent manner, the real love that wells up in their hearts. They would be indignant if any one accused them of coldness, or hinted that they were deficient in affection, and yet they refuse to give any natural or convincing proofs to the contrary. Such men are warring against nature, and will sooner or later find out their fatal mistake. Every emotion of the mind has its corresponding outlet. Pity leads to benevolence, gratitude prompts to thanksgiving, and love has a thousand channels through which, if not repressed, it breaks forth in gentle words, kind deeds, fond endearments and warm sympathies. He who blocks up these channels, and will not permit his affections to flow in their natural outlets, must not be surprised to find that they become stagnant, and finally are obliterated.

Every expression of an emotion strengthens it, and every repression weakens it. Anger, when allowed to exhibit itself in outward passion, grows and increases, but when firmly controlled, and held back from outward manifestation, it subsides. If we would conquer an unworthy emotion, the first step is to repress all its outward signs. The same rule holds good with the noblest sentiments, and the most virtuous affections. When cherished, and expressed, they grow strong; when curbed and restrained, they decay. Love, especially, is so delicate an emotion, that it is easily kindled, easily quenched. The tender word, the sympathizing look, the fond caress, the little offices of kindness; none may know how deeply these seeds of love sink into the heart, or how rich a harvest of happiness they bring forth. But the gloomy countenance, the austere tone, the unsympathizing word, the cold or indifferent manner; these are the things which, small in themselves, contain the elements of decay for all the sweetest affections of our nature. Especially as age creeps on, and one by one the hopes of youth are laid aside and the vigor of life diminishes, affection comes in with her gentle hand, soothing the downward road, brightening its clouds, and shedding over it the rich radiance of the setting sun. An unloved and unloving old age, is one of the most dreary of earth's sorrowful sights, but it is one that would never sadden our eyes, did we cultivate by every natural outward demonstration that holy emotion of affection with which we are endowed, and which, more than any other attribute, allies us to Divinity.

VENICE.

MOONLIGHT ON THE LAGUNE.

"*Abroad in a Summer's moonlight in Venice*"—wrote N. P. Willis, forty years ago—"is a line that might never be written but as a scene of a play." Never shall we forget the transcendant loveliness of an evening spent on the Lagune, when the moonlight was softly shimmering on its tranquil waters. There is near the Mole a sort of Beer Garden, where, seated at little tables in the open air, the Germans sip their beer and enjoy the pleasures of conversation at the hour of twilight. Sitting here at the water's edge we saw the sun go down in a heaven of blue and the moon rise as from a sea of glass. It was one of those supreme moments which repay the tourist for all the fatigues and annoyances of travel. As the twilight deepened we sat and talked of home until a dreamy and far-away feeling stole over us. Almost at our feet the silent gondolas were coming and going, as parties arrived or took boat for an evening on the water. It was impossible to resist the spell of such an hour, when the earth seemed overflowed with moonlight. We descended the stone steps to the water's edge and entering a gondola were soon gliding noiselessly out into the wide Lagune whose shallow waters encompass the city. A gondolier will make the circuit of the city in two hours.

We had not heard the gondoliers singing at their oars, and we thought that what Byron wrote more than half a century ago might still be true—

"In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier:
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear."

In the old days of Venetian independence Tasso and Ariosto were the poets of the gondoliers. Tasso's Jerusalem was sung in alternate stanzas, one voice taking up the first verse—

"I sing the army and the pious to-night
That the great sepulchre of Christ did free;
Much did he toil in heart, in mind, in might,
Much in the glorious conquest suffered he."

After a brief pause another voice responded with a second stanza:

"In vain to Him did earth oppose her rage,
In vain to arms did Turk and Lybian fly;
In vain did comrades fierce their quarrels wage—
Favored of heaven and blessed by powers on high."

In Byron's time, under the yoke of the Austrian, the song of the gondolier had died for want of heart, and we were curious to know if it had revived with the recovered freedom of the city.

"Can you sing, Gondolier?"

"Si, Signore."

It did not require much urging to induce him to take up the song, and he gave us several airs from the opera, executed with some degree of sweetness as well as strength. The dialect of Venice is very soft, having an elision of consonants that imparts in sweetness what is taken away in force. Having once taken up the strain, *barcarolla* and *canzonnette* followed opera. He sang the song with which Venice welcomed Garibaldi, and then he told of his own triumph in a boat-race in which he won a prize. Venice is the home of the regatta, and the gondolier is proud to come off victor in these water races. But what seemed most strange to us, coming from an almost songless land, was to hear this poor boatman singing the music of the opera, with us confined to the educated few, with taste and very creditable execution.

Thus we floated on over the shallow Lagune, at times almost running aground on the sand banks, which give a tortuous course to the channels. The beauty of that evening nail defies all description. The placid waters silvered by the moon, the lights of the Lido twinkling in the distance, Venice gleaming with its long line of gas-lights, other gondolas passing in the distance and giving back our song, the music of the band in the Square of St. Mark floating over the still water—all combined to give an hour of purest happiness, "a deep dream of peace."

"My soul was an enchanted boat,
Which like a sleeping swan did float
Upon the waves of that sweet singing."

—*Portland Transcript.*

LADIES AT THE CLUB.—A German club in New York having admitted ladies to its privileges, has fitted up a light blue parlor for them, frescoed its ceiling, furnished it in blue satin, adorned it tastefully, and now purposes a series of concerts, receptions and soirees.

WHY need one always explain? Some feelings are quite untranslatable. No language has yet been found for them. They gleam upon us beautifully, through the dim twilight of fancy, and yet, when we bring them close to us, and hold them up to the light of reason, lose their beauty all at once, as glow-worms, which gleam such spiritual light in the shadows of evening, when brought in where the candles are lighted, are found to be only worms, like so many others. —*Longfellow.*

AN OLD MAID.

Sitting with folded hands, that have dropped the needle and thread,
Looking athwart the fields, where the evening light is shed,
On the waving grass, and from whence arises the lowing of herds,
While the happy leafage thrills because of the time of the singing of birds.

Sixty rings, as I think, have circled her life-tree's girth,
Sixty years of the world, with its mingled pathos and mirth;
How has she taken the time since her baby-steps were set
Among the anemones' bloom, and the sweets of the violet?

What has she been, who sitteth with delicate lights dropping down
On the bowed head's silver locks, and the folds of the silken gown?
Has she not walked on the way that she chose at the gates of youth,
Bright in the graces of holiness, grand in the splendors of truth?

Bearing the hopes of the sowing, the gladness of those who reap,
Smiling with those who are joyful, weeping with those who weep;
Graciously grave, serenely bright, with a wisdom large and mild,
A man's clear judgment, a woman's love, and the faith of a little child.

In that heart of hers nestle the children, tired of the ball and the race,
Rested because of the love that shines in her beautiful face;
Women and men too, whose eyes have wept for the false or the dead,
One silent clasp of that firm, calm hand most deeply has comforted.

And many a heart that bleeds for its sin, and yet could not lay bare
The throb of its shuddering nerves to a cold, analytical stare,
Lying lone on the wayside of life, sits, tenderly bending above,
Doth soothe with the unguent of mercy, and cheer with the strong wine of love.

Was there ever a pitiful cry in the depths of her gracious soul
For the wifehood's joy denied, and the motherhood's aureole?
Can her thought go back to a time when her patient footsteps trod
Among the grieving thorns, alone with sorrow and God?

However it be, on her face is the look of sweet content
That comes when the music of life, of love and duty is blent;
And peace is here that is more than the joy of morning prime,
And light that is greater than day has come at her evening time.

WHAT IT IS TO BE A WIDOW.

It is to miss the strong arm you have leaned upon, the true faith that you knew could never fail you, though all the world might forsake you. It is to miss the dear voice that uttered your name with a tenderness that none other could give it. It is to hear no more the well-known footsteps that you flew so gladly once to meet. To see no more the face that to your adoring eyes seemed as the face of the angels of God. To feel no more the twining arms that folded you so lovingly; the dear eyes that, looking into your own, said plainly, whatever it might seem to others, yours was the fairest face earth held for him. It is to fight with a mighty sorrow as a man fights with the waves that overwhelm him, and to hold it at arm's length for a while only to have—in the hours of loneliness and weakness—the torrent roll over you, while—poor storm-driven dove—you see no haven.

DESTRUCTION OF CHILDREN.

Statistics prepared by competent authorities show that one child in every thirty-eight is bound to receive its death-stroke in school. Whose child it shall be that is thus to be cut down, no one can predict. But bad ventilation, irregularity in diet, disease-engendering attitudes, and other causes, which come from attendance upon school, are sure to cut down one child in thirty-eight every year.

This terrible fact is not to be wondered at when we consider the ignorance of the laws of health on the part not merely of those who control our schools, but of the community at large. Is there no remedy for this state of things? Why would it not be a good plan to subject every school-room to rigid sanitary inspection every day by competent men?

DEATHS FROM WILD BEASTS AND SNAKES IN INDIA.

India is not quite such a pleasant place to live in, after all, if we may judge from the statistics recently issued by the Calcutta Government of deaths, during the three years ending 1869, from wild beasts and snakes in India. Bengal leads off with 14,767 deaths from snake-bites, and 6741 from wild beasts. Madras counts 700 from snake-bites, and 888 from wild beasts. Northwest Provinces, 2474 and 2768 respectively. Central Provinces, 1961 and 1347. Bombay is more moderate, the return being 588 deaths from snakes, and 148 from wild beasts. While British Burmah seems the safest place of all: there only having been 22 deaths from snake-bites—but here we think there must be a mistake—and 107 from wild beasts.

CAUSES OF CONJUGAL QUARREL.—Nothing hinders the constant agreement of people who live together but mere vanity—a secret insisting upon what they think their dignity or merit, and an inward expectation of such an over-measure of deference and regard as answers to their own extravagant false scale, and which nobody can pay, because none but themselves can tell what pitch it amounts to. Thousands of homes would be happy to-morrow, if this advice were followed, and the offenders could have courage to apply it to themselves.

How fast time flies when you are working against it, how slowly when you are working to fill it up! What a difference between trying to get your work done before your dinner hour, and trying to fill up your hour before dinner with work.

GEORGE ELIOT says: "A woman dictates before marriage in order that she may have an appetite for submission afterward."

THE following are the leap year ball-room regulations established by the ladies of St. Louis: "Gentlemen are expected to be as lady-like as possible, therefore, no gentleman will be allowed to enter the ball-room except on the arm of his escort or one of the managers; no gentleman can dance unless invited to do so by a lady; no gentleman can enter the supper-room unless escorted by a lady; the lady managers will see that no gentleman is neglected."

READING THE BIBLE THROUGH.—A Connecticut clergyman recently announced from the pulpit that he had heard a man say that he had read the Bible through in sixty hours. Determined to ascertain whether the individual told the truth, he set about it himself and read the whole of it aloud to his wife in fifty-nine hours and something over thirty minutes. He read sometimes an hour and sometimes two hours a day, keeping the exact time, with the result indicated.

A LETTER passed through the Philadelphia Post Office lately, with the following inscription:—

To "Shannonville P. O." I wish to go,
To see my little dear,
Or "Mill Grove Farm," with her Pa and Mam,
Resides "Miss M. Van Leer,"
In Montgomery Co., if you will try,
You'll find this friend of mine.
So up and fly, Cupid be spry,
This is a valentine.

GOSSIP FOR LADIES.

THE CITY FASHIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST.—It is wonderful how many things are happening all the time, and how perfectly easy it is for any one to sit down every week and talk upon the same subject, and yet never be at a loss for ideas or items? As far as I am individually concerned, I feel very thankful to that kind beneficent genius who presides over the wardrobes of feminines, and who, out of the largeness of his or her heart, is constantly instituting changes and varieties.

I talked about everything last week, as far as everything had gone, and I was morally certain I should be obliged this week to fall back on murders and suicides, woman's rights' meetings, the Darwinian theory, spiritual seances, and St. Valentine's day, and other popular topics, to be able to make out any kind of a fashion letter. St. Valentine's day would not have gone very far, because there is never very much to say about it, though the unmarried people—meaning ladies—do dote on those little fancy slips of satin paper, with a pair of turtle doves in one corner and a couple of hearts in the centre, through which Cupid is sending one of his unerring darts. A good-natured, mischievous rogue he looks like; but, considering the trouble he makes in the world, it strikes me that artists should picture him as they do Death, with skeleton arms and grim visage, and clothe him in a friar's gown. What business has he to be plump and rosy, when he is constantly making pale, thin cheeks, and eyes dim with weeping, for everybody he comes in contact with? Here is an instance, let me cite it: Last year, at about this time, a lovely and accomplished widow, not a day over fifty, I am certain, was hit plump in the heart with one of these arrows from the blind boy's quiver. It came in a Valentine, and the poisoned point was sugar-coated with the words:

"Come in the evening, or come in the morning,
Come when you're looked for, or come without warning,
Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore you."

She knew the words were original, and she knew the writer was the young druggist on the next block; and moreover she was certain that the light of his genius would have illuminated that street at least, only that it was lost in the effulgent splendor of the two colored lamps in the one window of his little store. It was wonderful how many drugs and medicines that widow required! She did go in the evening and in the morning, and when she was looked for, and once she ventured to put in an appearance when she wasn't expected—just as he told her to, and then, lounging languidly over the doctor's desk, was a beautiful blonde of eighteen summers, with blue liquid eyes, who with her flaxen ringlets, that must have cost a mint of money, falling caressingly over her matchless shoulders, her immense braids that didn't show the "stuffing" a bit, and the pretty jet pins stuck in here and there all over her head, was "a creature much too fair and good for human nature's daily food" a being one might gaze upon with wonder, and with bated breath pronounce "a stunner."

The victim was surprised. She couldn't seem to take in the situation at all. She didn't see why that magnificent creature with the lovely eyes and "boughten" hair should be scanning her darling Edward's accounts, or why those hands, beautiful though they were, should be so familiarly with the gummed pages of the prescription book. The doctor was hanging around in dangerous proximity too. Not knowing what else to do the widow began to have heart pangs, and coughed audibly once or twice, but not being able to attract the doctor's attention, and not wanting anything else, she quietly took her leave, looking back over one shoulder as she passed out of the door, only to see the pretty blonde give her adored Edward a playful tap on the cheek with the little ivory paper cutter that lay so temptingly near.

Now, I suppose you would like an explanation of this strange little scene. So would I, and so would the widow. She tried to find out about it, but she couldn't, and if she, interested as she was, can endure the doubt and uncertainty that hangs over the whole thing, why of course you and I can. I haven't the least *certain* idea what the matter was; but I suppose, as the widow was rich, Edward had at first a determination to sacrifice himself on the altar of Mammon, but after sending the Valentine and getting a hearty response, he had somewhere encountered the blonde and got an arrow through his own heart, and on the strength of that had wisely concluded that youth and beauty and love and kisses were an over so much better investment than a lordly palace with nothing inside of it but one stately dame, old enough to be his mother. But that don't exonerate him. He ought to have thought of all that before. He had no business trifling with the affections of a lonely widow, the best portion of whose heart was buried piecemeal in the graves of three prior husbands.

I don't really know that we ought to blame Cupid for all this, but he certainly had a hand or an arrow in the winning of the widow's heart, and bringing to her what could be naught but a life-long trouble—a haunting memory torturing her noon and night; especially *night*, when the gas was turned low, and fears of burglars oppressed her soul.

But this is only one of several thousand sad cases. Every year returns its long list of victims—in the midst of love we are in doubt. It seems strange too, that we should trouble ourselves over these matters as we do, if as Darwin contends, we are nothing but a lot of Gorillas with a few modern improvements. If he is right, it strikes me that perhaps we should be happier if we hadn't had all these new fangled notions put in, but were still living along in the old original Chimpanzee style. What do you think about it?

I don't know that culture and knowledge and all that, necessarily bring trouble, but I have noticed that all these double-distilled, XXX, superfine mortals, with souls above the ordinary cares of life, are always miserable, dreamy, unhappy waifs, cast on a bleak, inhospitable, unsympathizing world. They never pine in secret though, do they? They have yearnings and desires, and they want everybody to know it; they are always full of tremendous imaginings, and aristocratic sentiment, and fancy themselves a little too pure for earth.

I've observed though that they are no more anxious to die, than the most sinful of us, and they are just as likely to fall in love—they don't call it that; they term it a spiritual revelation, or something else about as bad, when they find out what is the matter with them. But as if to balance things, and keep the ledger right, these people with spirit-longings always love somebody dreadfully human. It makes "troubles" in the family, but as their theory is "the saddest of all is loving," they wouldn't be satisfied at all, unless they were awfully *dissatisfied*. So it is all right."

But, begging your pardon, I set out to write a fashion article, and I mean to do it yet, notwithstanding I have been inveigled into talking about things that have no more connection with dress than they have with science. So, to commence, I will say that I have understood that a novelty in the fashionable world is known as the "Leap-Year Suit." I haven't seen it yet, and consequently cannot describe it minutely. All I know about it I gleaned from a young lady who is far from handsome, and who is somewhat given to slang, but who, nevertheless, has scores of admirers sighing at her feet, and enjoys it hugely.

She says the dress can be made of anything, only that it *must* have an immense train. Upon inquiring the necessity, she said it was so that the young fellows in the promenade would step on it, and give the ladies a chance to apologize; they would be taken with that, she said, for ladies generally looked daggers at such a time; but if a lady could smile and say something agreeable under circumstances of that kind, they would vote her a downright angel in disposition, and "go for her" at once. These dresses are furnished with lots of strings, too, she says, "just to get the fellows on"—I suppose she thinks she knows what she means, but I confess *I* don't. She further informed me that she had one making—a strong Ottoman Velour, that nothing could tear, and would stand any amount of stepping on, being exactly mud color to start with, and when it was done she would wear it over, and I could examine it to my heart's content. I asked no more questions, but she hinted a good deal about side pockets for billet doux, and handkerchiefs embroidered in colors that were to accompany the suit, but it was all Greek to me and will be until I investigate further. So until then believe me,

Ever truly yours, OLIVE KING.

The Limeburner's Story.

A THRILLING INCIDENT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY.

It was twenty years ago that what I am about to relate occurred. I was the superintendent of a number of lime-kilns in the rich lime-producing region of Carringham, Pennsylvania.

It was the day before Christmas. I told the hands over whom I had charge that, in view of the approaching holiday, our employer would excuse them from labor that afternoon; that I would return to the kilns and myself finish a little necessary work we had left upon going to our mid-day meal.

Accordingly, alone, I set off to attend to this duty, while my subordinates went rejoicingly to their homes. The kilns were situated on a lonely road in a remote part of the village—a road that was seldom travelled except by teamsters or persons coming to purchase. It was not probable that there would be many passers that afternoon. I reached the spot and commenced my labor. It occupied me longer than I had supposed it would, so that the day were well away, and I had not yet finished. December afternoons it must be remembered are very brief. I had yet to cover one kiln of burnt stone, before I could leave. The weather was very mild for the time of year, and rain was threatened instead of the more seasonable Christmas snow. It would never do to leave the kiln exposed, as its entire contents might thereby be "slaked," and thus greatly damaged for sale.

In passing near the brink of the open kiln I inadvertantly stepped upon a loose stone that lay upon it, and in my haste was somewhat awkwardly precipitated upon the mass below. I fell in such a manner as to fracture my leg, and on attempting to regain the top of the kiln, found I was unable to do so. An instantaneous chill of horror struck me. What if my leg were broken, and I could not extricate myself? I was in a lonely place, the workmen were all away, and my whereabouts might not be guessed until too late. For in my helpless condition I was exposed to a double danger: rain might fall and cause the burnt stone beneath me to "slake" and thus consume me in the heat generated in consequence, or the wind might change and blow upon me the deadly carbonic gases from the adjoining kilns, which were in full blast. My situation was most serious. I made repeated efforts to drag myself to the top of what was now my prison, but the pain was so exquisite, upon my making the least movement, that I was forced to give up the attempt. The distance to the brink of the kiln was very short, and yet, in my disabled condition, it was a fearful one to me.

I shouted for assistance, but had little hope of any but a chance passer hearing me. Nevertheless, I repeated my cries until I became hoarse and almost exhausted. A cold sweat broke out upon my forehead, and my fractured limb began to swell and pain me exceedingly. The early winter twilight came on. The clouds grew heavier and the wind howled dismally through the bare branches of the adjoining forest. If rain fell, and I remained unextricated, I was lost. Great Heavens! was I to be burnt alive?—was I to perish in this miserable manner? The thought was dreadful.

I reflected that my men were now safe in their homes, enjoying by their firesides the joyful Christmas Eve. My absence by this time was of course remarked, but my family would doubtlessly suppose that I had stopped at an adjacent village on business, as was frequently my custom in returning home.

Again and again I shouted for help. The moaning wind was my only answer.

An hour of agony went by—a long, dark hour it was; and then to my increased horror, I felt the gentle "tip tap" of rain-drops upon my brow and hands. God help me if that timid fall grew to be a steady shower!

Another hour—though to me it seemed like an eternity—went by, and none had heard me nor chanced to come to my assistance. I was about to yield myself to despair, for the rain was now descending steadily, when I fancied I detected a human footstep near. I raised my now feeble voice to a pitch of pain, and implored assistance. A startled exclamation was the response to my agonized call. Again I cried for help, hopeful now of aid.

"Who's there?" demanded a voice, which I thought was surely that of a woman. Yet how strange for such to be present at that hour. Perhaps it was only a phantasy of my over-tried brain. Was I going mad with the terrors of my situation.

"Help! help!" I shouted in tones that must have been terrifying in their pleading earnestness. "Help, for God's sake! I am perishing!"

"Who are you?" asked the person above.

"Mr. Eastman's superintendent," I replied. "I have fallen into the lime-pit and fractured my leg. Hasten for help, I pray of you!"

"I will do so," was the answer from my rescuer, bending over the brink.

I recognized the voice. It was that of Madge Barker, an intemperate and abandoned creature of the village of C——. She set off at once for aid, which in due time came, and I was saved. Thankful for my rescue, I was conveyed to my home, reaching it just as my wife, alarmed at my non-appearance, was about to go to the cottages of my men to make inquiries concerning me.

But how came poor Madge Barker there that dreary night? She told me afterward, when I again expressed to her my gratitude for her aid. She seemed strangely affected as I spoke, as indeed she had been before.

"It was God's work, not mine," said the poor creature. "You know what a wretch I have been—how everybody despised and hooted me. I could get no drink that night. I was tired of living, and folks were tired of having me live, and so I just thought I would go to the lime-kilns, *lie down where I could breathe the poison-gas and die.* It would be a nice, warm, easy death, I thought. That is the truth of the matter."

She burst into tears; and as for me, I was startled at this new revelation. *She* had saved my life, and *I* had at the same time saved hers!

"God bless and help you, Madge," I said with deep emotion. "Yours has been a sad life, but from this hour try to do better."

"I will! I will! I *must* to!" she exclaimed, piteously.

Her case was taken up by a kind-hearted lady of the village, who before had vainly endeavored to reform her, and Madge Barker was sent from the neighborhood to a distant home for such as she, where she entirely reformed and became a useful Christian woman.

I always cherished kindly feeling toward my rescuer, and asked charity for her of others. And so my little and curious romance ends.

THE MENAGERIE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

DEAR POST—I have been to the menagerie and I have seen the trained animal, called man, cut a caper to the tune of "Rake her down Sall." I will tell you all about it. I have been away from home; just where, it does not matter. It was some sixty miles from my usual abiding place in W——. It was in a country place where I was visiting, but the menagerie was three miles distant, in an aspiring little village with a double name. Its last name was ——. That is all you need to know. Its first name was not Black Hawk, though there is a ravine not far away that the "old settlers" call "Black Hawk Valley!" This village contains a church or two, a blacksmith shop, and a hotel. In this hotel is a dancing hall; in this hall I saw the sight. My friends told me there was to be a dancing party there that evening, and asked me to go. It was splendid sleighing, glorious moonlight, and the ride was pleasant. I enjoyed it. I also enjoyed the menagerie.

We reached the hotel; we went up into the hall. A party of four different bands of music occupied the musicians' stands. They were scraping and sawing, and trying to get in tune. The four different "pieces" had never been together before, and they found it difficult to make a whole, in spite of the rules of arithmetic which declare that four fourths make a whole. When they intimated that they were ready, we formed on the floor for dancing. There was no system about it. He who secured a partner, and reached the floor first, was considered the "best fellow." The sets were soon filled out, and dancing began. The musicians began also, in four different keys. There was one who called a change whenever it occurred to him. Sometimes he would forget, and play several bars without calling off, and then he would make up for it by calling three or four changes in succession, and the dancers would double quick to their places to keep time.

There was a very active young lady in our set. She had evidently practiced gymnastics, for she could leap full two feet from the floor, and cut a pigeon wing in mid-air. She was a most earnest dancer, this young lady. She threw herself into it, head, arms, and feet. Her hair went "all whizziky," and the plaited trimming across her dress waist slipped down over her arm, but she whisked up her hair with one hand, and snatched up the strip of trimming with the other, as I have seen boys pull up their suspenders, and went on with her dancing. Her partner wore one boot and one shoe, and limped a little. But his soul was in his feet, and his long limber legs nimbled gracefully through the mazes of the dance, at times tying themselves up in bow knots, then again stiffening out straight and long and lean. There was a change which I called the Polar bear grip. The gent seized the lady around the waist with both arms. She grasped his shoulders firmly, and then he swung her, and whirled her around until both began to feel dizzy, when they stopped and leaned up against something.

Two young men asked a young lady's hand for the same dance. She couldn't decide between them, so they concluded to "go shares." One was to dance the set half through, and then give way to the other. But the other grew tired of waiting, and when the Polar bear grip came, he stepped in and put one arm around the lady. The first partner already had an arm on the other side, and between them the young lady was in a fair way to get considerable of a swing. They tugged and pulled, and hopped, and pranced. Interested friends of both parties stood near, crying "Go in, Billy." "Your turn, Bob." "Don't cry foul, Bill." "Stick to it, Bob." "Never give up, Bill." "Go it, boys."

Several young gentlemen cheered, and hurrahed, and the young lady was thereafter the belle of the evening.

I saw two young men endeavor to perform that difficult gymnastic exercise of hitting their heels together in mid-air three times, while balancing to their partners, and keep time with the music. One succeeded, and gave a triumphant war-whoop that must have made the sods of Black Hawk Valley thrill with the thought of old times, when Black Hawk trod them, making the echoes ring with similar whoops.

One couple, instead of the Polar bear grip, took hold of hands, as I have seen school children do, and leaned back, and whirled, until the lady's dress would have made the old time "cheese," and the gent's coat skirt stood out at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Just before supper I saw the young lady who had danced so violently, leaning back in an arm chair, her face flaming, her chest heaving with exhaustion. She was completely prostrated; but supper revived her, seemingly, for I saw her upon the floor again just as I was leaving, taking a new step—a combination of can-can and pigeon wing, I should say—and the boot-shoe gent was ambling at her side. As I went below, I could hear the dancers overhead, and it sounded like the cattle from a thousand hills being driven into stalls. But a lady in the sitting-room, listening, smiled as she remarked, "That sounds like dancing. When folks dance I like to see 'em go in and enjoy themselves, and make a good noise, and not act as if they was asleep."

I went home.

"It's no place for a woman," said a young husband in Lawrence, Kansas, to his wife, when she, tired of staying alone, took her three little children to the billiard-room, and seated herself by his side. "It's disgraceful," said he, looking daggers at her. "I know it," replied the wife; "and you have borne the disgrace so long, my dear, that I am determined henceforth to share it with you," and she took out her knitting-work and settled down for the evening. Her husband persisted in urging her to go home. "I will go," said she, "when you go." He was evidently disconcerted in his playing, and went home earlier than usual. The next evening the programme was all acted over again. This time the husband went home a little earlier than before, and carried the baby himself. This was the last time he was ever seen in the billiard-room.

A SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GIPSY WILDE.

I.

Don't wear your faces so long, my boys,
Don't look down over your noses,
You may wade thro' a thicket of thorns, my boys,
But you'll surely come to the roses.
Don't delve forever among the clods,
Nor linger at wooden bars—
Upturn your brows to the radiant sheen
Sent down from the world of stars.

II.

Get out of the clouds, the mist, and the gloom,
The dank, the venom, and slime;
Come into the open, broad highway,
And breathe the blest sunshine.
Stir not ever the dust of the past
From under the dead brown leaves;
See before you a worldwide plain,
Dotted with golden sheaves.

III.

Off with the packs on your shoulders, boys,
They will surely drag you down;
Hope to wear on your youthful brows,
The victor's starry crown.
Don't think the world so bad a place,
(Because your wisdom failed ye;
You'll find that wounded vanity
Is most of what has ailed ye.

IV.

Don't think mankind a race of knaves,
Though you were knaved by one;
A pure and honest man, is not
A new thing 'neath the sun.
Don't lose all faith in womankind—
Tho' you were badly taken—
There's a loving heart somewhere for you,
That waits your touch to waken.

V.

Secure you'll find the human cup
Not always filled with honey,
But a jolly heart, and a merry soul,
Are worth a mint of money.
Then off with your colored glasses, boys,
And don't look over your noses;
Beyond the thicket of thorns, my boys,
You'll find a valley of roses.

PEMBERTON;

OR,

One Hundred Years Ago.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY HENRY PETERSON.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872, by Henry Peterson, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.]

PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

"Oh, peaceful earth—oh, patient, green-browed earth—
Sad mother of the whirlwind and the storm."

It is a morning in October, in the year 1777. Early morning—for the sun has not yet risen, though the heralds of his imperial coming are seen flushing with their crimson and purple banners the eastern sky. The earth, too, seems to respond with a regal pomp of banners. Crimson, melting at one place into a rich brown, flashing in another into a living flame, and harmoniously blending everywhere with the deep green of the cedar and the hemlock, is all around us. The glory of the earth rivals that of the sunlit sky. For, as we have said, it is October: and we are in Pennsylvania, the wooded land of Penn.

Two young ladies, arrayed in riding costumes, are standing before an open window, in an upper chamber of a large stone mansion. Their room being open only to the north and the west, they have caught but faint glimpses of the glory of the sunrise—but the glory of the earth-rise from darkness into light, is spread widely before them. The coolness of the morning air, which, though a little raw to those of maturer years, comes pleasantly upon their faces, glowing with the rich, warm blood of youth, also is like wine unto their buoyant spirits. Let us listen to what they are saying.

"Do you know what first came into my mind, Bel, when that fierce 'rap, rap, rap,' sounded on our door this morning?" said the younger of the two, a maiden apparently of some twenty summers.

"Yes—that the enemy were upon us. That made you spring out of bed in such a fright," said the elder sister, mischievously.

"Fright! and I the daughter of a Scottish colonel! You are joking, Bella. No, I thought we were again schoolgirls, among the nuns of Bethlehem.

"Sing a song of sixpence,
Pocket full of tow,
Sixty single bedsteads
All in a row.

"Oh, but we had high old times in Bethlehem, Bel. I wish sometimes we were back again, among the simple-minded sisters."

"Well I cannot say, Helen, that I do."

"Of course not—Pemberton!"

"André."

"Nonsense, Bel—I have not seen Captain André more than a dozen or twenty times in my life. But let us take one look more, and then go down. Uncle must be waiting."

"This is a beautiful place to live, Helen—is it not? See how finely the walks are laid out, with their marble vases and statues. And what a glorious view one has to the west, over the valley of the Wissahiccon! Where are the Chews now?"

"I think the Judge has been sent to Virginia—you know he is no more sound in the faith than 'Cousin' Pemberton; he cannot quite swallow the Independence declaration. He would not even give his parole to the rebels. I suppose the ladies are with him. They are brilliant girls."

"Had we not better go down now?"

"Stay—one moment. Do you see that gray mist—how curiously it sweeps down upon us from the north. One might almost take it for the sweeping onwards of a hostile army. I am afraid we shall have a dull morning after all, for our ride to town. See, how rapidly it comes—before it all light and sunshine; behind it all darkness and gloom."

"Hark! did you hear that?" cried Isabella, excitedly.

A dull report was heard, as if of a pistol, or distant musket.

"It is an attack!" cried Helen, when this was followed by a loud report, as of a field-piece, and then by the distant roll of a drum, beating to arms.

"Girls!" called a deep voice at the door of the room; and then the door was pushed open, and, seeing them attired, an elderly man, in the uniform of a British colonel, entered, and joined them at the window.

"What is it, uncle?" exclaimed both, almost in a breath.

"It is an attack—it may be in force. It is a bad business, girls, having you here."

"Do not be alarmed for us, uncle. We will give you no trouble," said Isabella, proudly.

"If it is in force, we must march at once," said Colonel Musgrave, as if communing with himself. "And it sounds so"—as volley after volley of musketry broke upon his ears. "But there comes one of Simcoe's dragoons," he exclaimed, as a horseman rode up in hot haste, sword flashing, and helmet glittering. "Come down, girls, we shall learn something definite now."

They hurried through the almost unfurnished house, and down to the front door-steps where the dragoon had reined up.

"Colonel—the rebels are on us. It was almost a surprise. They have our camp. But we are holding them back."

"How many? in force?"

"The whole of Washington's army, I was bid to tell you."

"Wait one moment, girls," cried the Colonel, as he sprang around the house, in the rear of which his regiment was encamped. Soon the roll of the drum was heard, and the silence of an orderly encampment gave place to loud commands and the bustle of military preparation.

"I must lead the regiment at once to the support of the light infantry," said Colonel Musgrave, as he again joined his wards. "Can you risk riding to town alone—or how would it do to ride to headquarters? That is only about a couple of miles off."

"If it were not for this mist, which has closed upon us so quickly, we could easily do either," replied Isabella.

"Why cannot we remain here?" said Helen. "We shall be near you, uncle—and there may be wounded men to care for. We are not cowards."

"No; I know you are not. But I should feel far easier in my mind if I knew you were in safety, and not exposed to those perils which always hang around contending armies. As to this house, if the enemy is in force, it will not be long a place of safety. I have sent word to Howe—but the advance of the rebels must be delayed as long as possible, in order to give time for him to get in position; and this mansion will make a capital fort, if need be."

Colonel Musgrave spoke rapidly and excitedly—as if anxious to be at his post.

"Well, uncle, do not fear for us; we will mount and ride, either to town or to headquarters, as may seem best," said Isabella.

"Who shall I send with you?"

"Nobody—we can protect ourselves for that distance."

"Perhaps you are right. A British uniform would be as apt to draw as to ward off a rebel bullet. And, rebels though the colonists be, they are not given to shooting at women. But come in and take a cup of coffee to brace yourselves up with."

A cup of coffee and some slices of bread were hastily swallowed, and then the young ladies mounted their horses—the Colonel at the same time springing on his horse.

"Girls, you know the way?"

"Very well," said Isabella—even in this mist.

"You had better, it seems to me, not try to go down the Main road. It may by this time be sprinkled with the rebel troopers. I should advise you to strike over to the east, to the Limekiln road, and make your way down it. You know that, about a mile down, you can either strike in to Germantown again, at the market place, or, if you hear firing in that direction, turn to the east once more, and follow the New York road to the city. If anything looks dangerous, take refuge in some private house—nobody will refuse protection to two lorn damsels in distress. But let me know at once, after the battle, where you are."

Colonel Musgrave had spoken rapidly—for his men had already left their encampment, with the exception of one company, which seemed to await further orders, and the roar of battle swelled louder and louder in his ears. Now he passed his hand rapidly over his eyes, and said in a slower, softer tone:

"And girls, remember, if anything should happen to your old uncle, that he loved you very dearly, and, next to his king and country, would have died for you."

Touching her horse with the whip, Helen was in a moment by the Colonel's side—bending from her saddle to throw an arm around his neck, and to kiss his lips. "Uncle, let me stay with you—to live or die with you!" exclaimed she.

"Yes, uncle—do not drive us away from you," chimed in Isabella. "Dearest and best of friends—heaven knows how good and kind you have always been to us."

"You quite make a child of me, my dear girls," said the Colonel, wiping his eyes once more. "And how foolish it all is! This is not my first, or my fifth battle, as you well know. I came out of the others safely, and I mean to come safely out of this. But, if you do not go, and at once, I shall fight this battle with a heavy and troubled heart. Hear how the roar of the battle deepens! It is coming nearer. If you go at once, I do not think there is any great amount of danger—but, if you stay, I know not what to do with you."

"We will go at once then," said Isabella, turning her horse's head to the south. "And may heaven preserve you—best of benefactors and friends!"

"Stay," said the Colonel—taking a pistol from its holster, and half smiling, notwithstanding the seriousness of the occasion. "Will either of you have this?"

"No, I thank you," replied Isabella, smiling in turn. "I will trust to the usual womanly weapons, and to the chivalry of men."

"Give it to me, then, cried Helen, impulsively. "Would I were a man to go with you, uncle, and not be shipped off as an incumbrance in this fashion. Is it ready for use?"

"Be careful with it, Helen—my servant always sees to it every morning. It will not fail you, if required," replied the Colonel. "But I can stay no longer. May the all-seeing God guide and keep you!" Putting spurs to his horse, Colonel Musgrave rode rapidly to the rear of the house—gave orders to the captain of the company he had held in reserve, to occupy the mansion, to barricade the doors and lower windows, and arrange everything for a vigorous defence if such should be necessary—and then dashed off after his regiment.

By this time the mist had so closed around, as to render it impossible to see more than twenty or thirty yards distance, and that imperfectly. Judging from the noise of the conflict however—the continual rattle of musketry, the cries and shouts, and the occasional roar of field-pieces—the battle was rapidly rolling down towards the mansion. This proved that the British were still giving ground. Occasional musket shots were also beginning to be heard on the Main road or street of the village, upon which, at a distance of several hundred feet, the building fronted. And it was evident to the young ladies that the sooner they started, the greater was their chance of effecting their ride in safety.

CHAPTER II.

Morton. 'This is a cruel bag!
Picton. Indeed, my lord,
You well may say so.

Well acquainted with the roads, and with the lanes,—as all the shorter and narrower roads were appropriately called in that section of the country—the young ladies rode as rapidly as the misty obscurity would permit, in a southern direction through a farm path, to a lane which is now called by the name of Washington, but which then doubtless had some local designation. Helen had concealed the pistol her uncle had given her, in one of the large pockets worn at that day, and notwithstanding the possible difficulties of their situation, the spirits of the sisters seemed to rise as their high mettled steeds chafed under the curb which it was necessary to hold upon them.

"Pshaw! would I were a man!" said Helen. "I would like to fire one good shot at least for my king—and stand by uncle Musgrave in the thick of the battle. We are but an insignificant tribe, we women, Bella."

"Well, for one woman, I am quite satisfied with my natural position," replied Isabella. "Why did you take that pistol? I declare I am afraid you will shoot me with it yet. I am glad that you have it on the other side of you. Take care you do not pull the trigger without meaning to."

"Never fear, sister mine. I have shot off a pistol before this. Captain André gave me a whole hour's practice, down at Gray's Ferry, one afternoon. But here is the road, is it not? Yes, there is the gate, lying along the road. What would the Chews say if they were here, and could see their beautiful country place now—gates and fences down in all directions."

"They are just as well off as their neighbors. I scarcely think there is a single farm fence standing in Germantown. What with the Hessian huts, and all the soldiers' fuel, the farms and country seats seem to be pretty well stripped. But, as you say, we turn towards the east here."

"If it were not for this mist we could canter to headquarters in half-an-hour"—said Helen.

"Yes, in less time—but do take care Helen; the ground is boggy near that stream," said Isabella, as they were crossing one of the little so-called creeks with which that part of the country is favored—streams which are seldom dry, even in the greatest heats of summer.

Slowly the young ladies rode on, the noise of the battle growing fainter as they rode. But they had not gone much more than a mile, before the quick ear of Helen caught a noise in front of them. "What is that, Bel? Do you hear it?"

"Stop a minute," said her sister. They had just ridden through a piece of woods, and they now gazed and listened intently. "It is the tramp and clatter of a regiment," said Helen. "They are going down the Limekiln road. What does it mean?"

"It means they are the Americans—marching to attack the British right wing," replied Isabella, in a low voice, her face whitening a little.

"We do not want to travel in that company," said Helen defiantly.

"No. We must turn back. And quickly too. I vow some of them are coming this way. Perhaps they mean to attack the Fortieth."

Wheeling their horses the young ladies rode back upon their track, and more rapidly too than they had come.

"What shall we do, sis?" said Helen.

"Wait a moment—let us see first how things stand."

They could not see, but they could soon hear how things stood. The large stone house they had left, then sleeping peacefully in its gray curtains of mist, was now a fortress, belching forth shot and smoke. Colonel Musgrave was evidently doing his devoir bravely, as a soldier true to his king. And other men, equally brave and true, and wiser in their day and generation, evidently were doing their devoir also with ball and bullet.

Despite the peril, Helen's cheeks flushed. "The Fortieth is holding back the whole of Washington's army," cried she exultingly. "Give me the Scottish blood after all, in the hour"—

Her sentence was suddenly cut short by a cannon ball, which struck the trunk of a large chestnut tree not twenty feet from them, and rolled on the ground at the feet of their horses. The spirited animals, already excited by the deepening roar of the battle, sprang and reared, until it required all the skill of the fair riders—practised horsewomen though they were—to reduce them to subjection.

"Well, what shall we do, Bel? This is getting a little too exciting here. We cannot go back to the house—the Main road is evidently full of rebels—and behind us are more of the same sort. Speak quick."

"The fences are all down—let us take to the fields, and push through them to the British lines. Of course there is some risk—but there is more in staying here," replied Isabella.

The good-sense of the suggestion was so evident, that at the word 'fields,' Helen had turned her horse's head to the south, and rode into the open fields—commons as they now seemed, in their desolation. They could still see only a very little distance around them—not more than sufficient to enable them to keep the general direction in which they wished to go—while on the Main road, which ran parallel with their course, they could hear scattering shots which told that the advance of the Americans had passed Chew's house, and was pressing down upon the British centre.

It was rather a trying position for young ladies who had been carefully and even elegantly nurtured; but, as the old proverb has it, "blood will tell," and these were Grahams—daughters of a race that had proved its courage and endurance on many a hard-fought field, and, what is more, in the cottage of the exile, and on the scaffold of the proscribed and the outlawed.

It would have seemed less trying even could they have put their horses into a wild gallop—but now that they had left the road, the danger of stumbling in the mist over vacant post-holes, and partially removed fences, necessitated the greatest watchfulness. And therefore, although they could hear the rattle of buckshot occasionally in the leaves of the trees under which they passed, they had to make progress slowly.

"Don't ride over that wounded horse!" at length suddenly exclaimed Helen to her sister.

Isabella pulled up hastily—for directly before her the animal was lying—evidently the horse of a soldier from the military equipments.

"I wonder where the rider is?" said she, in a sympathizing tone.

"There—look there—what does that mean?" cried Helen.

A wounded officer, dressed in the Continental blue and buff, was lying on the ground, apparently interposing as much resistance as possible, to the plundering efforts of a brawny Irish woman, who with a bag by her side, and a hatchet in her hand, was tugging at his coat to get it off his shoulders, careless of the pain of mind or body she inflicted. As the ladies rode up, they heard her say,

"Be aisy now, you ribil, or I'll split yer head with my hatchet—as I've served many a better looking lad nor you."

"Moll of the hatchet," said Isabella in a low voice to her sister. "It must be she."

The woman, looking up, suddenly perceived them. "What are the likes of ye doin' here?" she exclaimed hoarsely. "This is a swate place for the gintry, sure."

"My good woman," said Isabella, "you certainly are not robbing or hurting that wounded soldier!"

"He isn't a wounded soger, he's a baste of a ribil. Ride on wid ye, or it 'll be the wus for you. Ride on, I say."

Moll of the hatchet, for it was indeed she, whose bad fame as a cruel robber of the wounded had spread through both armies, now rose to her feet, and shaking her hatchet menacingly, again hoarsely bade them ride onward.

"Not a step!" indignantly exclaimed Isabella; "are you not ashamed of yourself, you, a woman, to maltreat a wounded and, perhaps, a dying man?"

"There's no use talking with such vile Irish trash," exclaimed Helen, the haughty blood of the Grahams flaming in her face, as she cut her horse with the whip, and forced him between Moll and the wounded man, nearly overturning the woman. Then flinging her whip to the ground, and pulling out her pistol, and cocking it, she presented it full at Moll's face, exclaiming, "Now, by the good Lord above us, if you do not at once drop that hatchet, and leave this place, I will blow your cruel brains out!"

Moll hesitated—though her face blanched, as her eye looked down the muzzle of the pistol.

"Down with your hatchet, I say!" said Helen, in the suppressed tones of deep passion. "One moment more, and I shoot!"

The hatchet fell to the ground.

"Now, leave this spot—at once!"

"By the holy Pathrick—she's the divil of an angel, or the angel of a divil," said Moll, in a half stupor, taking up her bag to depart.

"Put down that bag!" said Helen, the pistol again bearing on Moll.

The bag fell.

"Now go—and at once!"—the pistol still lowering—the light, firm finger on the trigger.

"By the holy divil," muttered Moll to herself, as she tramped off—glancing occasionally behind, to see the pistol still following her, until the mist hid her from view.

"That pistol was a friend in need, after all, sis," said Helen, demurely.

"You are my brave and noble sister; and your taking the pistol was an inspiration from heaven," replied Isabella, gazing admiringly upon her. "But what are we to do now? We cannot leave this rescued knight lying here, perhaps to be murdered by that vile hag, perhaps to die from want of proper attention to his wound. There must be some house near, into which he could be taken."

"There are plenty of houses, here and there, along the Main road; suppose you go and see if you cannot bring help from one of them, while I remain here on guard with my pistol."

"I hate to go and leave you alone."

"And I hate to see you go alone. But what can we do?"

The case was so clear, that Isabella turned her horse towards the Main road, in quest of a dwelling. She soon came to the rear of a medium-sized stone building, and riding up to the kitchen door, beat it lustily with the butt of her riding-whip. But no one seemed to be within. Dismounting, she fastened her horse to a part of the garden fence which remained standing, and pushed open the door. Entering, she nearly stumbled over a masculine form, lying extended just inside the threshold.

"Bress de Lord! Bress de Lord!" the white black lips of a prostrate negro were ejaculating.

"Where is your master?" demanded Isabella.

"Bress de Lord—he am down in de cellur," replied the negro.

Opening the cellar door, Isabella called aloud—

"Halloo—the house!"

A step was heard on the stairs, and soon a tall, gaunt form in Quaker costume, presented itself.

"What does thee want?" said the figure.

"Is the cellar the usual sitting-room in Germantown?" inquired Isabella, sarcastically.

"No, not the usual one. But thee sees when bullets come visiting unexpectedly, they are apt to put quiet housekeepers out"—and the Quaker, whose face denoted a fondness for quaint humor and sly jokes, gave a little laugh. "But what does thee wish—has thee come to spend a quiet day with Uncle Seth and Aunt Hannah?"

In a few words Isabella made known her errand. And to do Seth justice, now that good was to be done, he manifested very little fear of either cannon-ball or bullet. Raising the trembling negro to his feet, and giving him a good shaking to restore his mental and physical equilibrium—they both proceeded, led by Isabella, to the relief of the wounded officer.

"There are a good many Quakers about Germantown, I believe," said Isabella, as they walked on.

"Yes, and a good many quakers, just now, who do not belong to the Society of Friends," replied Seth. "Now, here's this darkey, Juba,—he's been the worst kind of a quaker, ever since he heard the first gun fired. But there's another of you, is there?" added he, as they approached Helen, who had returned the pistol to her pocket, dismounted from her horse, and was now bending over the wounded man.

She said he had been apparently conscious for a moment, when she had unloosed the tie around his neck, but had soon sunk again into unconsciousness.

"Fainted from loss of blood," said Seth—and taking the wounded officer carefully by the shoulders, while the negro supported his feet, they carried him to the house. The sisters accompanied them—one leading her horse, the other carrying the hatchet and the partially filled bag, which the Irish woman had left behind her.

When they entered the house, Seth deposited his inanimate burden on a settee, and said briskly to a kind-looking woman of middle age, who had come up from her place of safety to see what was going on:

"Now, mother—here's a wounded soldier. Bring down some quilts, while I see where he is hurt. Was he thrown from his horse, at the time he was wounded?"

"Indeed I do not know—we were not present—he is a perfect stranger to us," replied Isabella.

The Quaker looked as astonished as one of his composed sect could be expected to.

"I thought he was your brother, or friend," said he.

"No, we came across him accidentally," rejoined Isabella—and then briefly narrated who they were, and how they had left their uncle to seek a place of safety, and their encounter with the female plunderer—saying nothing of the pistol however.

"And so you persuaded Moll to give up her prey, and leave her hatchet and her plunder? Well, I never! But," and here his face brightened, "ah, I see—a little silver or gold will do a great deal. Money makes even such vicious mares as Moll go."

During his remarks however, Seth had not been idle. He had examined a little into the condition of the wounded man's shoulder, which was the injured place, and was now about pouring out some Jamaica rum into a cup. While the officer, on his part, manifested symptoms of returning consciousness.

"It is not an artery," said Seth, "that seems certain. The blood has clotted and stopped itself—and I will not remove the linen which sticks to it, because I might set it going again. When he swallows a spoonful of this good liquor, I think he'll feel stronger."

As the officer's face assumed a more natural hue, Seth started, and looked at him anxiously. Then he exclaimed, "Why mother, look here! Is not this our Stephen's friend, Lefftenant Morris of McLane's troop? It is surely."

"Of course it is," said his wife, "I wonder thee did not see it was, at first."

"I suppose I ought to, but then my wits were wool-gathering in a very different direction."

"Now," said Isabella to her sister, "as the gentleman seems to be doing well, and is among his friends, perhaps we had better pursue our ride."

"What!" said the Quaker matron. "You do not mean to go out among those dreadful soldiers!"

Seth stepped outside of the kitchen door. "Come here," he said to Isabella. "Hear that!"

The noise of musketry, which had been only faintly heard for the past half-hour, was evidently swelling up again, not only to the north of them, at Chew's house, but to the south, in the vicinity of the British head-quarters, and between themselves and Philadelphia.

"If you ride either north or south, you ride into the fire," said Seth. "Now take an old man's counsel. Remain here—in comparative safety. In perfect safety, if you choose to go below, into the cellar," he added, slyly.

Helen shook her head to the last proposition, disdainfully.

"Well, in this back room, with the front of the house closed, you are comparatively safe; and near to your uncle besides. I will put your horses in the stable, where they will take their chances with my horse—the only one they've left me. Mother will manage to find us something to eat for dinner—if we're alive to eat it—and when this horrible affair comes to a conclusion, as I suppose it soon must, one way or the other, you can mount, and ride wherever you think best."

"Indeed you are very kind," said Isabella. "We dislike to trouble you—"

"Not a particle of trouble, my dear," interrupted Mrs. Williams. "Come up stairs now; I know you would like to fix a little;" and she led the way, while the young ladies smilingly followed.

At this juncture, the wounded officer drew a deep breath and opened his eyes. Gazing around him for a moment, he said in a faint voice, "Why, Uncle Seth, I did reach here, after all. I was wounded down below, and thought I should never get to you. What a dream I have had! I thought I was dead, and a fiend and an angel were fighting over my body, to see which should have me!" and the young man smiled faintly.

"Hem! thee is all right—but thee had better not talk any more just now, but turn over and go to sleep. Mother is a splendid nurse, and I'm as good as a doctor; and, if thee minds what we say, thee 'll get well before many weeks, I warrant."

The young man closed his eyes, and seemed to obey very easily the advice given him. While Seth turned his face towards Juba, who sat, observant of all that was going on, in the corner of the fireplace, and saw the latter's white ivories illuminating the blackness of his visage from ear to ear.

"What is thee grinning about?" said Seth severely—"go out at once, and stable those horses."

Then he sat down in a chair, and seemed to enjoy something himself hugely, though in a very quiet, subdued and decorous Quaker fashion.

"Well, I suppose young men will be young men, to the end of the chapter," said he at length to himself, apparently as the result of his meditations.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Choice He Made.

BY ETTA W. PIERCE.

I know the story, for I am the housekeeper at Penhallow. The work of that dreadful year I saw with my own eyes, heard with my own ears, and nobody, barring my mistress, has it more by heart.

She was a Virginian, was Mrs. Penhallow, descended from some famous old colonial family. She was stiff-necked, high-featured, and she loved nothing under the canopy but her boy. A hard woman, born to rule, whose dependents were to her like so many cattle, to be fed and housed, and nothing more. A widow at the time I went to live with her in her great old country-house, with an only son and heir—Master Felix.

Heaven above! how she doted on that bold, insolent boy! I used to think when I saw her hanging on his every word and look, adoring him with her eyes and her heart, of what the Bible says about taking to ourselves idols. But Mrs. Penhallow was not the woman to trouble herself about that Book, especially as most of the common people have it.

Master Felix was sixteen when he left home for college, and I, for one, was glad to be rid of him. A purse-proud, tyrannical young tempest he was, handsome enough for a girl, but with a temper even hotter than his mother's. For a few years, peace and quiet reigned at Penhallow, always excepting the time of such visits as its young lord and master was pleased to make us. And after his collage days were over, he was betrothed to his cousin, and sent abroad on his travels.

His mother pined sorely at this separation. She spent whole hours before his portraits, which confronted one everywhere—in hall and drawing-room and chamber. She shut herself up, like a love-sick girl, to pore over his letters, and one night, in the second year of his absence, when I had found her walking the hall, trailing her satin gown in black glittering waves after her, she broke out, wringing her hands:

"Venner, every month of our parting is as a nail in my coffin! I can bear this great, silent, gloomy house no longer. I shall start for New York in the morning, to bring his betrothed wife back with me."

"I am glad of that, ma'am," said I. "She will naturally seem the next nearest now; and, indeed, it is very dull for you here."

The next morning, sure enough, she went, and, from some boarding-school, brought Miss Raymond back with her to Penhallow.

It was a cold, rainy Spring night, and I lighted fires on every hearth, and gathered all the servants into the hall to welcome them, because I knew Mrs. Penhallow liked such customs. They were all in their Sunday-best, and Molly, the mistress's vain little waiting-maid, wore pink roses in her beautiful flaxen hair.

We heard the carriage crunching the gravel of the drive; the hall-door opened; I heard Mrs. Penhallow say, "This is my daughter, Venner," and lo! there by the hand she held Mr. Felix's betrothed. Oh! a lovely young creature she was, with a face like a lily, and brown curls falling, and brown eyes, proud but tender, and all those lady airs and graces that seem bred in the very bone.

When the mistress called her "daughter," she grew rosy-red, and spoke so sweetly to us all, that we were ready to go down on our knees to her; and then the two went away to rest a little, and to dress for their late dinner.

"It will be a happy day when *she* is mistress here," said the servants that night, in the kitchen.

As for Mrs. Penhallow, she seemed extravagantly fond of her son's betrothed, and with good reason, too, for everybody knew it was she who had arranged the match. She always called her daughter. She refurnished half the house in her favorite colors, and loaded her with endearments, and shared Felix's letters with her, and those long doting hours before his portraits. Being a born lady and a great heiress, Miss Raymond just suited Felix's mother.

She had been at Penhallow a month or more, when the young lord thereof put in his appearance also, very sudden and unexpected.

It was one evening when the mistress and Miss Raymond had gone out riding together, and there was not a servant left in the house but Molly and me. Suddenly we heard a great knocking at the hall-door.

"Whoever can that be?" I said, for it was too late for callers. "Run Molly, and see."

It seemed as if the little simpleton would never get the key turned, and when she did, in pranced a magnificent six-foot figure, in a dusty travelling garb—a glowing nut-brown figure, as beautiful as a young god.

"Halloo!" he cried, gayly, "who is this?" and caught Molly straightway in his arms, and kissed her plump upon cheek and mouth.

The little ninny turned from red to white, and from white to red. She was marvelously pretty, and so long as the world stands, men will admire pretty faces, I suppose, whether they belong to princess or beggar.

"I am Mrs. Penhallow's maid," she answered, with more spirit than I would have given her credit for. "And you, I suppose, are her son."

"Quite right," said he, and stared and laughed; and then I ran out straightway to meet him, and immediately pushed Molly away.

"How d'ye do, Venner?" he cried, assuming his own lordly air at once. "Where are my mother and Miss Raymond? Have you a groom to send over to the station for my luggage? and is there anything to eat in the house? I assure you I am quite famished."

"Gracious heaven!" said I, "it never can be you, Mr. Felix, so tall and bearded! Who ever would have known you? The ladies are out driving, and won't be back till dark, but the groom is in the stable, and the larder is full, as it always is in this house."

I called Molly to help me, and we served him with the best we had. He was very gay and nonchalant, and he looked askant at her, and talked incessantly to me, and asked me untold questions about his mother and the estates. Molly seemed very shy and uncomfortable under his bold, knowing eyes.

"Well," said I, "Master Felix, right glad am I that you've come back to marry and settle down here."

"By which I judge that you quite approve of my future wife, Venner?" said he.

"Oh, a sweet, beautiful lady she is, indeed!" cried I. "Everybody at Penhallow loves her already."

"Then, in duty bound, I must do the same," said he, with a whimsical laugh, and drew out a cigar; and as he stood scratching a match against the marble mantel, I heard him humming to himself these lines:

"Oh, I loved in my youth a lady fair,
For her azure eyes and her golden hair;
Oh, truly! oh, truly, I loved her then,
And naught shall I ever so love again."

"I think I will go out and meet them, Venner."

And he went off down the walk, and came upon the carriage just as it was turning into the gate.

I heard their voices for a long time out among the trees, and finally saw them sauntering back together, Mrs. Penhallow looking quite dazed with happiness, and Miss Raymond hanging upon his arm, with a sort of shy grace, her lily face covered with smiles and blushes, and with that in it, and in her air, which made me sure she had found her master.

Dear heart! Yes, she loved him in that wild, worshipful way that a woman delights in, and that no man ever deserved yet, or ever will, till the pattern is altered.

As I was going up to bed that night I met the mistress on the landing, and she looked as radiant as a bride.

"Give me joy, Venner!" she cried. "This is the happiest night of my life. He has come back to me—to wed one of his own kin—to be with me evermore while I live. Ah, yes, Venner, one might well envy me to-night!"

"Well, I am glad, ma'am," said I, "right glad!" and indeed I was, for it seemed to me, as it did to her, that pleasant times were coming to the old house.

I kept thinking it over after I had gone to bed. It was a Summer night, and the moonlight streamed into the chamber where I slept, and filled it with a great white light. Outside, the wind made a moaning sound among the trees. Inside, of a sudden, I heard something go "tick, tick, tick" in the wall.

I will own that the sound, coming as it did, when I was full of such pleasant thoughts, gave me a most uncomfortable feeling. I never yet heard a death-watch without a creeping of the flesh—without feeling deep down in my soul that somebody's time was near at hand. I rose up in bed and listened. It came from that portion of the wall nearest the staircase. Distinct and regular as the strokes of a pendulum, I heard it, over and over again—tick, tick, tick.

I got out of bed and put my hand on the panel. There was a momentary silence; then it broke out anew in the floor under my feet. Back to the panel, and from the panel to the ceiling, and from the ceiling to the window, I chased the hateful sound about till I was both chilled and exhausted. In a closet off my chamber, Molly lay sleeping, as youth and health only can sleep. I was tempted to arouse her, but she looked so calm and pretty, with her flaxen hair tossed about the pillow, and her lips half apart, that I hadn't the heart to do it. So I crept back to bed, and, for half the night, never so much as closed my eyes, because of the dreary "tick, tick" that death-watch kept up in the wall.

I told Mrs. Penhallow about it the next morning.

"Ma'am," said I, "there'll be a death in this house soon.

She lifted her heavy gray brows at me.

"Venner, I am astonished! Nobody but very ignorant people believe in such things. Never mention such a matter to me again."

And out she went, to breakfast with her son and Miss Raymond among the flowers and greenery of the lawn.

Miss Raymond that morning was in white cashmere and pink ribbons, I remember, and with her streaming curls, and proud, sweet eyes and lily face, she looked as the Sleeping Beauty might have done when the prince first awakened her. And *her* prince had come, sure enough, but his manner toward her one couldn't quite approve. It was too careless and light—too much like a grand seignior, who has only to throw the handkerchief.

"Well," thought I, "he's seen a host of handsome faces, no doubt, and so got indifferent to beauty, perhaps, for he's one of those men that all women admire, and many a heart he's made to ache, I'll warrant."

A week or two went by, and I saw that in his own lordly, careless fashion he was devoting himself to Miss Raymond. He used to spend whole hours lolling beside her chair, and they sang a great many love-songs together, and rode and walked a great deal about the country, and seemed uncommonly happy. Day in and day out, there was nothing but fêtes, and garden-parties, and excursions, and balls, and festivities, both at Penhallow and among the neighboring gentry; and Molly's eyes grew heavy with waiting up so late at night for the ladies, and Miss Raymond, I heard, was the belle of all these gatherings, and every son and brother for miles around was madly envious of Master Felix, who only shrugged his lordly shoulders and smiled languidly. To much love is bad for men, I have noticed, and Miss Raymond loved Felix Penhallow altogether too much.

All this while, night after night, I heard that death-watch tickir g in the wal

I remember well the time when I began to suspect something wrong. One evening the mistress was ill, and Miss Raymond went to sit in her chamber. It was an August night, with a full moon in the sky, and no wind stirring. So close and sultry it seemed indoors, that I was fain to walk out as far as the entrance-gate for a breath of fresh air. The grounds were full of intricate windings, and black and thick with shrubbery. I strolled as far as the high-road, then turned about, and, half way back to the house, stumbled upon two figures—man and woman—walking together under some linden-trees.

I was a little startled, and I stopped short, and looked at them. There was no mistaking the splendid head and shoulders of the man; I felt and knew he could be no other than Felix Penhallow. As for his companion, she was *not* Miss Raymond, but more I could not say, for she wore a hat and mantle, and kept persistently in the shadow. I only saw that she was slight, and I guessed her to be young.

His arm was around her as they walked; he leaned over her, talked to her in a low, murmuring, love-like tone, and once lifted her head in his two hands, and kissed her passionately.

I stood rooted to the earth, staring at them through the dense shrubbery. I could hardly believe my eyes. Miss Raymond within, watching with the mistress, and her handsome, nonchalant lover without, wandering through the moonlight and making love to another under the rose! It seemed as if I must be dreaming. But they turned suddenly, and came toward me, and as it was plain that discovery would be awkward for all parties, I hastened to give them one last look, in which I saw that he had gathered that slight figure up to him, and was holding her head on his heart, and then I fled breathlessly through the shrubbery, and back to the house.

I got as far as the kitchen, and there sat down, quite overcome. The maids were all out, and it was a custom of mine to sit up always till they came in for the night. The last who appeared was Molly.

I don't know what made me eye the girl so closely on this particular occasion, unless it was her unusual pallor. She was a pretty little thing, as I have said before, round and plump and blue-eyed, like a Dutch shepherdess, and vain of her white skin and flaxen hair.

"Where have you been, Molly?" said I, cross enough.

She colored, and stammered, and dropped her eyes, in a way people have to whom lying is new.

"Down to the village, ma'am."

"With some follower, I suppose. Mrs. Penhallow's bell has rung for you. I must watch you, miss. There's enough that's sly and secret going on about this house already."

She gave me a quick, odd look, then went away without another word to answer the bell.

The "tick, tick" in the panel that night sounded louder than ever; it awakened that simpleton, Moll. She rose up in bed, and peered out into my chamber.

"Oh, Venner, what is that?" she quavered.

"A death-watch," said I, crossly. "Lie down, and go to sleep."

She looked dreadfully frightened.

"Then some one is going to die!" cried she, for she had been bred in the same superstition that I had.

"Well," said I, "I'm pretty sure it's not you, Molly."

But she began to sob and cry, piteously.

"Oh, Venner, I'm a wretched girl!" said she. "I would rather it would be me than some others. Let me come into your bed; I'm afraid."

And she wouldn't be appeased, but nestled down with me, and went on for a long time in a way quite broken-hearted, and without speaking a word.

The next morning Miss Raymond, in descending the staircase, met with an accident—slipped on its slippery edge, and fell, striking her temple against some projecting bit of carving. Mr. Felix and his mother were in the drawing-room at the time, and both rushed to help her, calling for me. When I reached them, he was kneeling on the floor, with Miss Raymond's head on his knee, her pale face upturned, and her brown hair overflowing him.

As we bent to loose her dress and give her air, from a chain in her bosom dropped out his portrait—the handsome shadow of his handsome face. Mister Felix looked up at his mother in a dark, strange, remorseful way.

"Why did you ever bring her here?" he muttered. "Why did you ever meddle with either of us?" and he dropped her into Mrs. Penhallow's arms, and rose up and walked out of the room. The mistress looked quite dazed.

"What did he say, Venner?" she asked, with her hand to her forehead.

"I'm sure I didn't understand, ma'am," said I, and no, I didn't.

But that night Felix Penhallow was walking in the shrubbery again with one who was not Miss Raymond.

I kept my own counsel for a few days, and then I went to the mistress.

"Ma'am," said I, "I'm quite at a loss about Molly. She's out till midnight sometimes—where, or in what company, I'm sure I don't know. She's but a young thing, ma'am, and it's time, I think, that somebody looked to the matter."

"Indeed," said the mistress, "I have noticed something odd about the girl of late. I will speak to her presently."

The very next morning, as Molly was flitting past the breakfast-room door, her mistress called her, sharply. I had been summoned in also to receive some orders for the day, and was standing by Mrs. Penhallow's chair, as Molly, a little pale and frightened, entered. Haughty, and stiff, and stern looked the mistress, and in the window near by, with her lap full of roses, sat Miss Raymond, very sweet and lovely, talking to Felix Penhallow.

"Molly, come here!" said Mrs. Penhallow, sharply.

The girl, with downcast eyes, stepped forward.

"Where did you go last night?" demanded the mistress, before us all. Molly grew red, then pale.

"Not beyond the gates, ma'am," she faltered, looking so pretty in her confusion that I pitied her.

"Do you presume to tell me, girl, that you were out in these grounds till midnight *alone?*" said Mrs. Penhallow.

The girl did not answer—only stood staring at the floor. Mrs. Penhallow took hold of her arm somewhat roughly.

"What!" she bristled; "you have a follower—when I have utterly forbidden it, too!"

Molly shivered in her hold, but remained dumb.

"Why do you not answer?" cried Mrs. Penhallow, her hot temper rising fast. "You have been keeping scandalous hours of late, and you have grown very pert and insolent in your manner. I am certain you have a lover. Speak, and tell me this moment—who is he?"

Suddenly, and with all the coolness in life, Mr. Felix lifted his languid, handsome shape from leaning against Miss Raymond's chair, and stepped forward.

"My dear mother," he said, in a clear, measured voice, "you frighten her with your violence. Let *me* explain. She was not alone in the grounds last night, for I was with her."

"*You!*" echoed Mrs. Penhallow, rising slowly.

"I!" repeated he, and went straight up to Molly and flung his arm around her. Never in his life had he looked so handsome, so kingly, as at that moment.

"Mother, you mistake the situation," he cried. "She has no 'follower,' but a husband. I am he. She has been my wife for three entire weeks. It is time, high time, that you knew all about it!"

With his arms around that girl, there he stood before us all, and pronounced those words. Till my dying day, I shall never forget the scream that broke from the lips of my mistress. As for Miss Raymond, she started up, with her hand to her heart, and then dropped to the floor in a dead faint. I ran to her, but Mrs. Penhallow stood stark and stiff, and confronted her son.

"It is a lie!" she shrieked—"say it is a lie, Felix!"

"No," he answered, coolly, "it is no lie, mother. I loved her, and I have married her."

Terrible, indeed, was the face that she turned upon him.

"You have married her!" she hissed; "your mother's servant! You have disgraced a name that never knew disgrace before. You have broken my heart and Eloise's—you, the son I bore—the son I have loved better than my own life. I curse you for it! I pray God to curse you, now and forever!"

Of course she was beside herself, or she would never have said those dreadful words. It made my blood run cold to hear her. She uplifted her jeweled hands in fierce denunciation.

"Go!" she screamed. "Take her out of my sight! Never let me set eyes on either of you more! I will throw my wealth to the winds—give it to the off-scourings of the earth, sink it in the sea, but not a penny shall the beggar you have chosen ever have! I curse her! I curse you both! I pray Heaven to register it!"

Well, such a terrible scene I never before witnessed. I went so far as to throw myself between them, in my terror. He had a temper, too, and there were some frightful things said on both sides; and then he ordered the carriage, and, haughty and defiant to the last, took his wife by the hand, and led her away. He was very tender with her; I have always remembered that, and honored him in my heart for it. He embraced her repeatedly, and kept saying, in a tender, protecting way, "You have nothing to fear, dear child—nothing!"

I saw him place her in the carriage himself, and then he hesitated a moment, and turned and came back as far as the hall-door.

"Farewell, my mother!" he called, in a voice that seemed singularly calm and sweet to me; but my mistress was bending over Miss Raymond, who still lay in a deep swoon, and she lifted her head, like a Medusa, and answered back:

"From this hour I have no son!"

And so they parted.

We knew afterward that Mr. Felix took his wife directly to the village inn, not more than a mile distant from Penhallow.

As soon as she recovered, Miss Raymond begged piteously to be allowed to start at once for New York. She could not abide the place longer, poor lady! and no wonder. So the groom drove her away to the station in Mrs. Penhallow's close carriage, and the great, grand house was left quite desolate.

Mrs. Penhallow passed the rest of the day in her own room, thinking. Heaven only knows what thoughts. She ordered dinner to be served at the usual hour, and called me in to help her dress, as if nothing had happened, though all the while she was shaking like a woman with the palsy. But she had a spirit, as I have said, and a temper, and she could not bear that even her servants should see how she suffered.

All alone she sat down at her sumptuous table in her great dark dining-hall. The house seemed like a tomb that night. Summer was waning, and the dark fell early. The trees outside tapped with a lonesome sound against the windows. The shadows in the corners, and the deep silence, seemed unutterably dreary. My mistress felt it, for she asked me to wait by her chair—for company, I think.

It was the mere mockery of a meal; yet she would go through with every course. Just as the lights were brought in, she gave a sudden start, and turned to me.

"Hark! Venner. What is that?" she said.

I listened.

"The wind, ma'am, most likely," I answered. "There's a storm brooding."

"No!" she cried, seizing my arm. "Hark, I say! Don't you hear it now?"

And, sure enough, as she spoke, the clatter of hoofs, loud and heavy, rose up in the drive outside.

"Go and look, Venner," said my mistress, in a queer, strained voice.

I ran to the window, and saw standing in the wild, windy twilight, close up to the door, with his head thrown high, and his nostrils dilated, a horse, saddled, bridled, and riderless.

"Ma'am," said I, "it's a beast that's thrown his rider, I should say—leastwise, the saddle's empty."

She rose up, white as death, and came and looked, and saw the horse snorting and stamping out there. Then she rushed for the bell, all her weakness gone in a moment, gave it one fearful peal, and was out before I could stop her—out in the drive, flying down it wildly, with the wind in her satin drapery and gray hair.

I started after her, waiting for nothing. My heart was in my throat. As I gained the high-road I saw her before me—a black shadow whirling away into the night. I called, but she heeded me no more than the wind. Down the hill I ran in her footsteps, and along a little intervale, and up another hill, where there was an old sand-pit, with a bit of treacherous ledge overhanging it. I saw her go up to this and stop on its verge, and look over, and then throw up her arms, with a frightful scream, toward heaven. And then up the ascent I, too, tore, and stopped, and peered down the sandy, sliding abyss, side by side with that proud, proud woman who had driven her son but a few hours before, with curses, from her doors, and with her saw him lying down there far below us, in a heavy, bloody heap, stiff and dead.

"The brute must have shied suddenly when he came to the pit," one of the men-servants said. "Master Felix was always a careless rider. He had a way of dropping his reid when he was thinking, and letting the horse take his own course."

They carried him back to Penhallow, and his mother followed him, neither weeping nor wailing, but calling him by every tender name she had used in his babyhood, and wiping the blood-stains from his face with her own gray hair. They had just laid him down in the great hall, when there came a footstep in the walk without, and a white figure, with flying hair, darted in through the open door, and ran up to the dead man, and his mother. It was Molly.

"And you killed him!" she screamed, pointing to my mistress, who writhed and shuddered, and flung out her hands before her face. "You cursed him, and you killed him! He could not bear your anger; he was on his way this night to beg your forgiveness. His heart was tenderer, by far, than yours. And now look at him! You hated me because I was your servant. Do you like death better? Is the grave a fairer wife for him than I? You have murdered him. It is all your work!"

And she went on raving like this, with such a look and such gestures as I never saw before, and my mistress stood like a stone, and answered not a word to her, till none of us could bear it longer, and we carried her by main force away.

After the burial, Penhallow was closed to everybody for many a long day. Only I and two or three of the old servants remained, and with us the mistress lived on, shut up from all the world, aged, and broken-hearted and humbled to the dust. Molly had gone back to her own people, but one day Mrs. Penhallow came to me, looking very strange.

"Venner," she cried, "I have heard great news!"

"Indeed, ma'am," said I.

"That girl—Felix's wife—has a child—a son, Venner, and I never knew it till to-day!" She trembled and shook, and her face was quite white and her hands worked oddly, and she bade me get on my bonnet and my shawl at once, and make ready to go with her, and that night she brought home Felix's widow and her child.

So Molly walks the old rooms to-day, bearing herself like any lady born and bred, and she has been wise in her way, and acquired, with uncommon quickness, the airs and graces of her station. And her boy is the heir here, and the idol of the mistress, and a fine, bold, handsome fellow he is—a true Penhallow. As I watch him, sometimes, it seems to me that God has forgiven my mistress the curse she once asked him to register, and restored the son again to the mother, so like this Felix is, in his rich nut-brown beauty, to that other Felix who hung about the same knee twenty years ago.—*Leslie's Lady's Magazine.*

"AULD ROBIN GRAY."

[Leigh Hunt once remarked that Robin Gray had "suffused more eyes with tears of the first water than any other ballad that was ever written." The song was once very popular in England, and it is still a favorite among those people who have the gift of ballad-singing. It was written by Lady Anne Barnard, who died in 1825.]

When the sheep are in the fauld, when the cows come hame,
When a' the weary world to quiet rest are gane,
The woes of my heart fa' in showers frae my ee,
Unken'd by my gudeman, who soundly sleeps by me.

Young Jamie, loo'd me weel, and sought me for his bride;
But saving a crown-piece, had nathing else beside.
To make the crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea;
And the crown and the pound, O, they were baith for me!

Before he had been gane a twelvemonth and a day,
My father brak his arm, our cow was stown away;
My mother she fell sick—my Jamie was at sea—
And Auld Robin Gray, O, he came a-courting me.

My father cou'dna work, my mother cou'dna spin;
I toiled day and night, but their bread I cou'dna win;
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and, wi' tears in his ee,
Said, "Jenny, O, for their sakes, will you marry me?"

My heart it said Na, and I looked for Jamie back;
But hard blow the winds, and his ship it was a wrack;
His ship it was a wrack! Why didna Jamie dee?
Or wherefore am I spar'd to cry out, "Woe is me?"

My father argued sair—my mother didna speak,
But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break;
They gied him my hand, but my heart was in the sea;
And so Auld Robin Gray, he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been his wife a week but only four,
When mourning as I sat on the stane at my door,
I saw my Jamie's ghaist—I cou'dna think it he,
Till he said, "I'm come hame, my love, to marry thee!"

O, sair, sair did we greet, and mickle say of a';
Ae kiss we took, nae mair—I bad him gang awa,
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
For, O, I am but young to cry out, "Woe is me!"

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena much to spin;
I canna think o' Jamie, for that wad be a sin,
But I will do my best a gudewife aye to be,
For Auld Robin Gray, O, he is sae kind to me!

A NOBLE ERROR.

BY EDITH S. JAY,

AUTHOR OF "JENNY'S THREE BALLS," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

The evening arrived, Kilmurray dressed himself in his evening suit, which chanced to fit him, and (he having purchased it second hand) was by a fashionable tailor, and placed in his coat a white camellia Mrs. Ormonde had sent him. He would fain have exchanged it for a loaf, or a glass of beer; but he feared to offend her, and so went hungry on his way.

Arriving at the house, he was at once hurried into the dancing room, out of the way of the busy domestics, and felt, as he looked at the broad expanse of white floor-cloth, the brilliant lights, the festive flowers—a faint undignified twinge of longing and regret for the mild amusement to which he must be a stranger forever.

"I used to 'go' rather well myself," he thought, "and squeeze extras out of the poor wretches till I wondered they could play a note more. Now it's my turn to be bullied."

Presently Mrs. Ormonde came in. She started back a little at the distinguished appearance of her *protegé* as he stood in the middle of the room, his head somewhat erected by the recollection of past greatnesses, and his toilette more cared for than usual.

"I thought it was a guest anxious for a *tête-a-tête*," said she. "But I'm glad to see it's only my musician."

"Do I look such a swell?" asked Kilmurray, languidly.

"Indeed you do, camellia and all."

"Yes, thank you—only I wish you had given me a shilling instead. It would have been more appropriate, seeing that I had to spout my great coat to get a handkerchief that was not in rags. I'm proud of this, for it is a whole one."

"It * * * There's something on it—blood!" said Mrs. Ormonde, in rather an awed tone, shrinking back.

"Already?" said Cecil, vexed but careless. "Oh, yes—I had a fit of coughing as I came up stairs. It's a bore, for it looks horrid, does it not?"

Mrs. Ormonde made no reply; she had intended to reproach Kilmurray for not telling her his whole story, and to warn him about his conduct in her house—later in the evening too, to be amused at his expense, and Miss Ashton's.

But she had no longer any inclination to do so. She said in a lower voice, "I did not know you were so ill, Cecil," and turned away to complete her arrangements, while Cis, shrugging his shoulders, warmed himself at the fire till he was sent to the piano by the arrival of the guests.

In the pause after the first dance, "Mr. and Miss Leigh and Miss Ashton" were announced, and the three entered. Aurelia, dazzling in black and crimson; her brother, a handsome man, exceedingly like wax-work, and Dolly (on whom he very frequently turned his china blue eyes) delightful to behold, dressed in pure white, with one big blush rose in her soft hair, and a demure society manner upon her.

Kilmurray had turned round involuntarily at her name, and their glances met; but, as might be expected, without more result than a bow and a smile from her, and a slight acknowledgment of both from him. Then he returned to his task, and she started for a galop with her wax-faced Adonis. She liked the latter rather better than she did most men, for though slow, vain of his good looks, and a trifle dull, he was honest and kind-hearted. So she did not snub him as cruelly as others, and always danced with him a great deal.

It was so now, and Kilmurray saw it, and felt a degree of hatred for the guileless Horace, only to be conceived by a jealous lover petrified into powerlessness. He fancied he could catch tender whispers, even amid the noise he himself was grinding mercilessly out of Mrs. Ormonde's Erard. He caught glances, as only those whom their agony of envy gifts with a sort of omniscience can, of Dolly's winging smile, and Leigh's answering glow of satisfaction; and he muttered through his clenched teeth, "Cruel! That simpering fool—under my very eyes!" forgot that for weeks he had schemed for just the end that seemed impending; and stung to madness, pounded at the notes till the hearers remarked it was "so spirited" ("like fireworks" said some bright mind), and where *did* Mrs. Ormonde pick the man up.

At last, in the middle of the evening, Dolly came and stood beside him, and asked the name of the valse he had just played.

"It hasn't any name. But I shall call it the 'Dolly Leigh' from to-night," he answered, with a fierceness that made the tears quiver into her eyes.

"Are you not *very* tired?" she asked gently, after a moment.

"*Tired?* Am I not paid to play?" he answered with scorn. "Besides, who cares?"

Unhappy Cecil—the words slipped out before he could check them; but he need not have dreaded.

"We should all care to exhaust you for our enjoyment," said Dolly, in her kind way.

"*We*—Mr. Leigh?" inquired Kilmurray, fixing his eyes suddenly and bitterly on her face.

"I dare say—he is very good-natured."

"He would not kick me for venturing to talk to you, for instance, or tell the servants to turn me out, or—"

"*Oh!*" said Dolly, looking down at him reproachfully.

Just at that moment Mrs. Ormonde came up, and began—

"Cecil, as you know Miss Ashton, you can ask her to dance if you like, and if she'll have you for a partner I'll play."

Miss Leigh had urged her friend to carry out their plan; but she had lost pleasure in it, and spoke languidly.

Dolly brightened in spite of her self-command; but Kilmurray answered at once, formally.

"I shouldn't presume to ask for such an honor. Besides, I've forgotten my dancing, and everything else I used to do and feel."

Dolly hung her head a little, and one faint word came pleadingly to his ear. "*Everything?*"

She had put aside pride and modesty for his sake, and this was her reward.

"*Everything*," said Cecil, equally low; but with a deadly emphasis, and she, drawing up, went slowly away.

The wretched evening dragged on. The last dance came, Miss Ashton was, as usual, with Mr. Leigh, who was quite at her feet, a hopeless captive. Mrs. Ormonde pitied Cecil a little in her heart, and had sent him up a good supper; but the power to eat was gone, and indeed, he was no longer pale and weary. His eyes flamed, his cheeks were flushed, he sat upright, and dealt with the notes as if they were so many Horace Leigh's, till the dancers could not say enough in his praise. As to Dolly, she was very pale, and wore a piteous endurance of manner, a tearful smile, wandering dilated eyes that wrung honest Horace's heart. He thought at first the cause might be love for himself; but he found it couldn't; because the tenderer he was, the sadder she became.

Once, as they stood near the piano (he had been pressing her to go with his sister to another dance, and she had assented without knowing that she did so) he cried fervently—

"You will? I'm so awfully glad! Say 'yes' again."

There was a pause in the galop. You may have remarked this artifice of composers, which is sometimes an inestimable blessing to a weary fingered musician—sometimes, I am afraid, a curse to a confidential couple in full swing of love making.

"Say 'yes' again!"

"Yes."

"Jove! what an odd noise. Did you hear, Miss Ashton? As if somebody gave a sort of groan, you know: fancy anybody here groaning! Awfully funny, eh?"

The galop went on capriciously—now fast, now slackening, now in thundered chords, now in a weak treble tapping. It was very feeble as Mrs. Ormonde approached the piano.

"Mrs. Ormonde!" said Cecil, in a horse whisper, looking up at her, still playing as he spoke, "You said I might dance with Miss Ashton before. In pity, if you have a woman's heart in you, for God's sake ask, pray, beseech her to take a turn with me now!"

Mrs. Ormonde, hard and worldly as she might be, was not pitiless. She nodded an answer to his look of agony, and going to Horace and Miss Ashton, said—

"Mr. Leigh, you're so amiable. Will you relinquish your partner to my poor musician who has been delighting you? He knew her long ago, he says. Miss Ashton, you won't mind? Come, Mr. Leigh, you can afford to lose her for *one* turn."

"Poor wretch, I can't say 'No.' But it's an awful sell—uncommonly cheeky of the player fellow, too!" remarked Horace.

Dolly quitted him with a laugh; it seemed to her so absurd an idea that Leigh's "No" could prevent her granting Kilmurray's request.

Then Cecil rose up slowly from the piano, came across to her, stared at by all the room, and took her on his arm. The stateliness of his demeanor, the fierce resolution of his face, startled those who saw it, and frightened Mrs. Ormonde lest he should make a scene. There was no danger: he said never a word; when Dolly began falteringly, his warning gaze silenced her; but he put his arm round her waist, and they started.

Round and round—she growing dizzy, terrified. And yet how blissful it was to have him once more so close, so tender, so strong, with his heart beating against hers.

Round and round, he feeling as if every turn were a step towards death, yet dazed and calm with the depth of his agony. Calm—aye, even though little Dolly's soft hand was in his own, little Dolly a sweet breath on his cheek, little Dolly his—all his—for one moment—the first for eight weary years; the last forever.

Round and round—his fond hold growing closer, closer, till with a last frenzied pressure, strong as though no power in Heaven or earth could part them, a deep despairing "God bless you for this, darling!" he released her.

Then he returned quietly to his place, said "Thank you" to Mrs. Ormonde, and, by her orders, began an extra. Such a dance as most people there declared had never been, never would be again. Now thunderous chords, like the rattling of cannon, the tramp of armies; now lightning runs, a thousand voices and trumpets thrilling victory—swifter and swifter, louder and louder, fiercer and fiercer.

"He plays like a fiend, not a man," cried some one breathlessly. And then abruptly, from the tumult of rushing sound and furious confusion, rose a solitary strain—a sweet, homely, tender tune that went to every heart there—that rose and swelled, gently, plaintively, pleadingly—"Home, Sweet Home." Wordlessly eloquent, so peaceful, and yet so full of vain, resigned regret, it melted through the room, sighed into fuller melody—sank—paused—

They saw the "player" pause, and lift his arms; they thought it a professional trick to give effect—to let the sound wane and die. But suddenly his hands, his head fell forward with a crash on the keys, a faint choking, gurgling sound followed, and the nearer beholders saw a tiny dark stream trickling sluggishly over the ivory, and marking the white floor with deep stains.

All rushed forward; but Mrs. Ormonde put them back, and leaned over poor Cecil, lying helpless, choking, fighting feebly for breath.

"He has broken a blood-vessel," she said, gravely. "Dr. Norton, come here. I must bid the rest of you good-night."

The "rest of them." Dolly amongst them. No, Dolly would not go till she had separated herself from them, till, with streaming eyes, her trembling hands on Mrs. Ormonde's arm, she had begged in vain to stay, and then had said "Oh, take care of him. I love him so dearly. We loved each other once, indeed, indeed. Oh, I think he loves me still! O don't, don't, let him *die!*"

But Miss Leigh dragged her—still gazing fondly back at fainting Cecil—from the room, and Mrs. Ormonde answered coldly.

"I'll look after him, my dear; but young ladies would only be in my way, and besides it is not proper for you to say so much."

Dolly knew she could not force herself on her hostess, so, heart-broken, she went home and moaned and prayed, pacing the room in her unchanged ball-dress, till, wearied with sorrow, she sank on the ground—still crying—

"Oh Cecil, Cecil! He blessed me—he called me darling—his last, last words. Oh God, help him, save him, have pity!"

Mrs. Ormonde was kind, but she was prudent, and when Cecil made her understand he did not wish to stay in her house an instant longer than he could help it, nor let his own residence be known, she made no opposition, and discreetly averted her eyes from the card which was taken from his pocket, and given to the cabman who drove him home—whom she was generous enough to pay.

Yet as she saw the last of that unhappy pale face, and those blood-stained lips, which tried to move in faint gratitude for her good offices—such as they were—as the image of her own only son, who was shot through the head in his maiden battle, who died at nineteen; happy, fearless, smiled on by the world; being all then that this Cecil Kilmurray might once have been, who, had he lived, *might have* been what Cecil now was; her heart chid her, and she wished at least she had ascertained his address, or given him money to pay for a doctor. But unfortunately these regrets, like most of their class, come too late.

Kilmurray's illness was a boon to him, inasmuch as it dulled the poignancy of his mental tortures, and it seemed to him only like a horrible dream to be jolted over the stones to his own door, where the cabman, grumbling loudly at the narrowness of the street, summoned a pale, red-nosed man, who grumbled also on seeing the condition of his lodger, and called "I say Missus, Missus"—helplessly, till his spouse appeared, and took matters in her own more capable hands.

"I ain't got nothin' to say agin Mr. Murray, what'll pay his room when he ain't got a ha'penny not to buy a bit of bread, and never come in drunk nor giv' the 'ouse a bad name with the p'lice," said she volubly. "And that's the truth. . . . But as to taking in sick folks—I say, won't yer let Cabby take yer to the 'firmary, Mr. Murray? Do, there's a good man," she added coaxingly, putting her head into the cab. "They'll nurse you a deal better nor you'll get nursed here."

But Kilmurray shook his head and moaned a negative so piteously that she could not send him away: and, besides he had paid a week's rent the day before, and had a right to come in. So with great difficulty the husband and wife conveyed him up to his room, and the latter put him to bed, and charitably took her place beside him as watcher.

His most distinct feeling was relief at escaping the hospital or infirmary: for he had a dim impression of something very sad and dreary having happened to him there—which event was, in fact, his "pulling through" when he wanted to die.

He "pulled through" this time, too; miraculously, as the poor do without proper nourishment or medicine, with brief visits from the overworked parish doctor, short intervals of his landlady's company, and long hours of melancholy loneliness, when he lay watching one particular stain of damp on the ceiling, where the rain came through, and trying to guard his mouth and chest from the pitiless wind admitted by the almost unglazed window. The doctor had procured another blanket and pillow for him, and Mrs. Larkin would sometimes bring him a-day-old penny paper; but these were all the additional luxuries his illness procured for him; for his fellow lodgers had called him "igh," and were shy of offering what *might* be rejected. The first words he was able to whisper in his landlady's ear were, "Let no one know where I am—say I'm gone." And Mrs. Larkin, who was not unaccustomed to such a request from her lodgers, made this reply when Dolly, who had obtained his address through the music-seller's, sent to inquire for him: and garlanded the bare fact with so many life-like incidents that she was not troubled a second time.

He got well;—what he called well—he arose from his bed as near a skeleton as a living man could be, with a ceaseless cough, and an inability to go up-stairs without stopping at every third step to get his breath; but he could walk, and speak, and teach—that is to say, if he could get any pupils—and that he must do, or die of starvation instead of disease. When he was hesitating whether he should stay in London, he was offered the post of "musical illustrator" to a sixth class travelling lecturer; and as the pay was just sufficient to maintain some sort of life upon, he accepted it.

In those long hours of desolate sickness he had pondered deeply; all the fond hypocrisy, the unintentional self-deception had been swept away; he knew now that in honor, in justice, in love to Dolly, he must never look upon her again on earth.

He would leave London, and night—oh, peaceful and pleasant thought!—die in some little country village. His dream of his last rest near Dolly's old home was over, for the expenses of his illness had swallowed up his small savings.

Even that poor dream!

We used to talk of "love in a cottage," he thought. "Death in the workhouse does not sound so pretty; but is the more likely to be true, for me."

A week after he had left town, Miss Leigh paid Dolly an early visit, and after executing her usual fond greeting, cried, "I had a letter this morning that concerns you."

"Me?" said Dolly, seriously, and with rather a chill at her heart.

"Yes, you. You know Mr. Kilmurray—Murray now?"

"Yes, I know him. What—what is it?"

"Only that his sister Blanche and her husband, Julian Verney—don't you remember him, when the 130th were at Burnley?—are both dead of cholera; both in one day. Awful thing, isn't it? I thought you'd like to hear it. I don't know whether you ever see Mr. Kilmurray, and can tell him—not that I suppose he'd much care, for his sister gave him up when he did that thing, when—"

"When they *said* he did it," interrupted Dolly.

"My dear, he confessed to it! It *must* be true."

"I don't believe it is."

"But, you dear little inconsequent thing, don't you see—"

Dolly rose, and pressing her hands on her breast, said firmly, "I did not, I don't, and I never, *never* will."

A fortnight later, an Indian letter came to her, addressed in a legal hand; it was directed to Boyle House; but as some old friends of the Ashtons had been living there, had been sent on at once. It ran as follows:

"CALCUTTA, Oct. 29th.

"MADAM,—As the late Captain Verney's solicitor, and one of his executors, I am directed to inform you of his death, which took place on Monday, the 17th October, of Asiatic cholera. In his last moments, being conscious, he dictated to me the accompanying declaration, which having, by his request, read to such witnesses as were at hand, I now, by his request also, forward to you. His words, as he delivered it to me, were as follows:—'Tell her, as she was the only one who believed him not guilty, but wronged, she shall be the first to right him at last.' I have, by Captain Verney's desire, forwarded copies of the declaration to Colonel Offham, C.B., Major Hewett, and Arthur Brington, Esq., now in England. I have also to state that he leaves the bulk of his property to Cecil Kilmurray, Esq., late 130th Regiment, or failing him to yourself, 'as a slight token of gratitude to the former for a sacrifice which can never be estimated nor repaid.' In conclusion, I must beg you to favor me with the present address of Mr. Cecil Kilmurray, should you be aware of it; or if not, to furnish me with any particulars which may lead to his discovery. Requesting the favor of an immediate answer,

"I am, Madam,
"Your obedient servant,
"To Miss Ashton." "ALFRED EVANS."

The enclosure ran as follows:

"I, Julian Robert Verney, Captain 130th Regt., do, in these my last moments, most solemnly and sacredly, on my oath as a Christian, and my honor as a gentleman, declare—That on some day in May, 185 ,—at Burnley, —shire, being pressed for the payment of a secret debt long due, and threatened with its disclosure to my father, I stole from Colonel Offham's study, in the Barracks, a bank note, value £500, which was lying on the table, and tempted me. That, when the loss was discovered, and the money, with the exception of twenty pounds, paid away, I was afraid of the consequences of my act, and went to consult Cecil Kilmurray, Ensign in the same regiment, who was in the habit of advising me in all difficulties, and was in possession of my most private matters. That, after stating the case to him, and representing that the discovery of my guilt would infallibly lead to the rupture of my engagement with his sister, by his father, whom we both knew to be a severe man; probably, to my own father disinheriting me, and certainly, to the utter ruin of my character and prospects in life; he, Kilmurray, agreed, in the event of an inquiry, to accuse *himself* of the theft, and suffer the consequences, whatever they might be. That the suggestion was entirely and generously his own, and that he indignantly declined, then and thereafter, to receive the smallest compensation of any kind for the sacrifice. That a private inquiry being made, he carried out his intention, and was, in consequence, forced into leaving the regiment, and devoting the proceeds of the sale of his commission towards the repayment of the £500, and was disowned by his family and friends. That he refused to accept at my hands even the sum thus expended, or a smaller one to start him in the world. That, for the past eight years, I have steadily influenced my wife, Kilmurray's sister, and did influence her father until his death, and have always persuaded mutual friends, to believe his guilt, lest they should suspect mine. That in one instance *only*, I failed—that of the person to whom I specially address this declaration, Miss Dolly Ashton, who alone (though some others were disposed to *palliate* his guilt), consistently and firmly denied its existence. That I desire her forgiveness for such vain endeavors, and also for the indirect breaking off of whatever engagement may have existed between herself and Kilmurray.

"That it is my dying wish and injunction that copies of this declaration be sent to all those who were aware of the affair of the theft, who still survive.

"That, finally, before God, I deeply repent my sin, and entreat Cecil Kilmurray, by the recollection of his own past unfailing kindness, by his affection for his sister, my wife, by all he holds sacred, as he hopes for mercy, in this world and the next, to be merciful to me, and to pardon a sin which lies heavy enough on my soul without the additional burden of his anger. That I make this declaration in the presence of the three undersigned witnesses, being of sound mind at the time.

"JULIAN ROBERT VERNEY."
("Wm. Newton, Cap. 130th Regt.
(Signed) "Elliott Hoskyns, Surg. 130th "
("Alfred Evans, Solicitor."

Dolly received and read these two letters as she sat at breakfast opposite her aunt, to whom she handed them when she had done. She was petrified at first, with awe and great joy, and could only say over softly to herself texts and thanksgivings; but after a moment her heart was too full, and creeping gently upstairs, she knelt by her bed, where she had so often prayed bewildered and hopeless, and poured forth thanks and praise.

When she returned to her aunt, the latter, usually a calm and strong-minded person, was in a flutter of excitement and inquiry.

"Who is this Mr. Kilmurray? Really, one can hardly believe in a man keeping a secret so long!" she said.

"You remember the . . . the one who seemed to care for me, at Burnley, Aunt Anna?"

"Yes. Was that him?"

"And the children's music-master, and the musician who was taken ill at Mrs. Ormonde's?"

"Perfectly. You don't mean to say he has fallen into such poverty?"

"Indeed it is so. . . . But it is all over now. Oh, how good God is!" cried Dolly, clasping her hands fervently. "Now, Aunt Anna, how *shall* I find Cecil—Mr. Kilmurray?"

"Send for a detective, and let him get a clue out of that woman in Marylebone lane. I always suspected she knew more than she owned to; but I would not unsettle your mind. Now, I suppose you will not be quiet till you have found Mr. Kilmurray?"

"No, no. How could I? And then I'll be quite, quite ready to go to him directly."

"But, my dear, you don't know how he may have changed in eight years. Hadn't you better—"

"If you will go with me, Auntie, I should like it," answered Dolly, wilful for once. "But I *shall* go. I know he loves me; I always loved him, and nothing on earth shall come between us again."

She was so seldom determined in opposition that Miss Ashton, the elder, yielded; besides, she had no real authority over her niece."

The detective was sent for, found, and despatched on his errand, while Dolly endured as patiently as she could the usual feminine martyrdom of waiting.

He was not long in returning, with the information that he must leave town in pursuit of Kilmurray at once, and promising to telegraph directly there was a chance of getting at all within reach of him, he departed again.

Two days and nights passed, and Dolly's heart died within her. So near freedom and happiness, ignorantly in sight of the goal, had he fallen by the way, would there be for her only the poor triumph of vindicating his dear memory from the long shadow cast upon it, and then must she live out her life, purposeless, as far as self was concerned, with no home for her heart's love but a grave?

Another morning dragged over: then, as she stood at the window, working feverishly, she heard a sharp ring, and in a moment more, flying down stairs, had received into her own hand the expected telegram.

"Found. Come down by 12.40 from Waterloo to Blue Lion, Marne, —shire."

She rushed up to her aunt, implored her breathlessly to hurry, made her own preparations, and with the Indian packet carefully secured, they were soon on their way.

The utmost speed of the express was like a snail's crawl to Dolly; but they reached their destination in course of time, and were driven over to the inn, situated in a pretty quiet village, that lay so still and small in the winter sunshine, it seemed impossible to Dolly the climax of her fate could come to pass here.

White, the detective, met them with a not perfectly satisfied face, and escorted them silently into the Blue Lion's best parlor.

"There's been a little slip," he said, when the door was shut, "but we'll set it all right directly. Now, ladies, you listen to me, and then we'll act together, steady."

Dolly assented faintly, and sat with her

lips apart and her hand grasping her aunt's, as he proceeded.

"When I got hold of the clue, and knew he'd come here with this Blondel (a sort of lecturer, Miss, who tells you a pack of lies, and then sings you a song to make them go down) of course I followed, and arrived this morning in time to see the performance. I knowed the gentleman I was after the moment he come in front; for the other was just one of those fellows as makes stump speeches and sings at music halls. *My* gentleman's tall, and mighty thin and pale, speaks very soft, and for all his shabby clothes, looks like a swell. Well, he comes in, leanin' on this Blondel's arm, lookin' as white as a corpse, and so weak he couldn't hardly get across the platform, and coughin'—not loud, but fit to tear himself in two; sits down at the piano, and begins to play. But he could make nothing of it—seemed as though his fingers hadn't strength to make the notes sound, his head was hanging down on his chest, and you could hear his breathing half across the room. I see the other lookin' very fierce at him; but Lor' bless you, ladies! he was too far gone to care; he couldn't have done no better if her Majesty had come and asked him herself.

"Then Blondel steps up to him, and says very low—but I heard him—'Cuss yer, are yes a goin' to ruin me by shamming sick. Don't you hear, they're a hissin' already?' And they was, too, thinkin' as my gentleman was drunk. Well, he draws himself up, and tries to do better; but 'twas of no good, and at last he stopped outright. Then Blondel pulled down the curtain, and I heard him a swearin' and a cussin' awful behind it.

"And then, Miss, I run off and telegraphed." He paused, and continued gravely. "Thinkin', of course, as he was so ill he couldn't move out of his lodgin', which I knew of—but when I come back from the station where the office was, and went to see after him, he'd *gone*."

"Oh, Auntie!" sighed Dolly, with a little moan and shiver.

"Now, ladies," added Mr. White, consolingly, "he can't have gone far; for he wasn't fit to stir out of bed. So what I proposes is we three should each take a trap and a man with us and try the different roads. There's two gigs and a ponychay we can have, and it'll go hard if we all comes back with nothing to show for our trouble. Perhaps, though, the young lady had better not."

"Let us go!" cried Dolly, starting upright, her tears and her weakness vanishing at the prospect of immediate action, and greatly to the wonderment of peaceful Marne, the three "traps" started in different directions, White and Dolly in the two gigs, and Miss Ashton in the pony chaise, each being provided with a driver who knew the country.

Dolly's charioteer was a sharp lad, and gave it as his opinion that the gentleman would take the south road.

"If 'e's the nighest to his lodgin', and gets into th' fields the quickest," he remarked. "And a' looked so wildlike when a' left the Lion, as if a'd go anywhere where folks wouldn't stare."

Dolly's instinct, more than her intellect, impelled her to reply, "Drive fast into it, then. A great deal of money has been left him which he does not know of, and he will reward you if you help me to find him."

So they hurried on, and when fairly in the fields, Dolly checked their speed, and was driven slowly through narrow lanes fresh with spring green, between high banks, studded with primrose buds, across shallow streams and crazy wooden bridges, greened over with moss. At her suggestion, the driver raised his voice, and "halloed" at intervals; but in vain. Nothing answered in all the fair solitary fields, but the bare startled in its form, or the shrill pipe of a bird in the hedge, the distant sound of the river, the solemn caw of rooks flying overhead. Still, serene, pitilessly lovely, the pale blue sky smiled down, the leafless boughs black and fine in fairy tracery against it, still, serene, untroubled, the broad downs stretched purpling to the clear horizon, as if no foot of wanderer had ever trodden them since they came from their Maker's hand, as if there were no such sad and holy and high things as sin and sorrow, mercy and repentance, in such a beautiful, calm, soulless world.

"We're comin' to th' heath now, Miss," said her companion, dimly commiserating the silent agony in her face.

"Happen a'll be there. There's high gorse and such like, and tramps often gets a shelter among it."

A great expanse—purple, brown, shot with flashes of golden gorse blossoms, with a black fir or a delicate larch here and there, and a few pools like silver shreds of sky fallen on the grass, fringed with rushes and flags. Dolly gazed at it despairingly.

"If you like, you can get out, and you and me can walk about a bit," suggested the lad. "Th' gorse be mighty thick in places, and maybe you may come upon him where you least expect. T' ould mare'll graze as long as you'll let her. I'll go one way and you t'other—and you hail me if you want me."

Dolly assented, jumped down, and "t' ould mare" being left to her own devices, started on the right hand, while her charioteer took the left.

She walked for a long, long time, in and out the prickly thickets tearing her dress to rags, getting deep into bog and sand, descending chalk pits, clambering steep knolls. She dragged herself on, unconscious of fatigue, every nerve, every sense, strung high with anticipation, long after the lad had rejoined his steed.

The evening shadows were falling; but she could not tear herself away, or do anything but struggle on, praying piteously as she went. She thought confusedly of a picture she had seen of the Good Shepherd with a lamb—rescued from just such a rough way as this—in His arms, and she half-wondered if He had taken the lost sheep she sought into His fold at last—away from her.

Suddenly there rang through her soul a faint, faint sound, scarcely more than a sigh, yet audible in the intense evening stillness, and not ten paces distant. She turned, and flew like lightning towards the spot.

And there, under the shadow of the bushes, stretched on the ground with his face downwards, and his arms flung out, as if he had asked in vain for pity, lay Cecil Kilmurray—found at last.

She lifted him; she never knew how, laid his head on her bosom, and felt that he breathed still, though his hand was icy cold and his eyes glazed. She called the lad, and ordered him to fetch the shawl left in the gig, begged for his own great-coat also, and wrapped them round her charge; she clasped her own warm arms over all, and then said to her companion, calmly and clearly—

"Drive back to the inn: Gallop your horse! Tell the landlady to send a fly and pair, blankets and brandy, and get a doctor at once. Tell her to have a bedroom ready, with a fire. You shall all be well paid. And ask my aunt to come here, if she has returned; say he is found. Drive fast, for God's sake!"

"And leave you here, Miss, in the dark? There's tramps about, and——"

"Tie this white handkerchief to that tree—see, close by, that you may know the place at once when you come back. Now go—never mind me. Hurry, hurry, to save his life."

The boy, awed, hastened to obey—and presently the horse's hoofs thudded rapidly over the soft turf, beat fast along the road, and died gradually in the distance.

Dolly was alone in the gathering night which seemed to press upon her; but she was not afraid. She drove away the first chill feeling sternly, tried to hope, and whispered to herself the 23d Psalm; tightening her tender embrace of her heavy, helpless burden, and saying to herself, "I must keep cheerful and firm, or I shall be cold, and not able to warm him. If I take care of him, God will take care of me."

He was quite still; but where her cheek was pressed against his forehead, not so cold, and she fancied his breathing was stronger, and that she could now feel the beating of his heart.

And even in that moment she was happy, for he was hers again, and she thought that He who had brought her Cecil through so much peril and misery could not, would not, take him from her now. A short space, which seemed an age, and lights flashed through the darkness, eager voices sounded; the gig and a fly rolled up as fast as horses could draw them.

"Oh Dolly," cried her aunt, sobbing, and alighting with unparalleled alacrity from the latter vehicle. "I could not think what had become of you! Are you safe? Is he dead?"

"I am quite safe. And he—Oh, he *must* live!" she answered. Then, wrapped in yet more coverings, Cecil was lifted—no great weight now—into the fly, and a few drops of brandy forced gently between his blue lips. Dolly sat by him, and laid his head on her shoulder once more, and they drove as rapidly as was consistent with safety towards the Lion.

There, when he had been placed in bed, and the doctor had administered proper restoratives, when Dolly sat beside him fondling his unconscious hand, it suddenly stirred a little in hers. No mother, seeing the face of her first-born, was ever more enraptured.

"Darling, darling Cecil, you're quite safe," she murmured, putting her face close to his, "Dolly will take care of you."

He half opened his eyes, with a very faint, peaceful smile.

"No harm—no wrong—*now*," he sighed, and then putting his lips feebly against hers sank back into the torpor want and pain had brought upon him.

How Dolly watched and nursed him, how no smallest sign of amendment escaped her, how she implored the doctor to cure him, with such touching faith that he felt it a point of honor to do so, and how all the inmates of the Lion were vividly interested in the *dramatis personæ* of the romantic story which had oozed out, I need not describe.

At first Kilmurray was too utterly exhausted in mind and body to do anything but submit blissfully and unquestioningly to his position; but when his senses returned, an anxious, half-guilty look began to show itself on his face, and he murmured something bitterly about the trouble he was giving, and the necessity of his soon setting to work again.

Then Dolly saw it was time to tell the happy news she had feared might dangerously agitate him at first. He was now out of immediate danger, and, with very great care would recover, the doctor said, though his convalescence would be a protracted one.

"Mr. Kilmurray," said she, as she sat beside him one bright spring morning—for the last two days they had fallen back into uncomfortable formality—"Dear Mr. Kilmurray, I have something to tell you. . . A sad thing in itself, but it has a very, very good result."

"To me—not to me?" he asked in a languid, hopeless tone.

"Yes, to you."

"That I am to get rid of all my burdens at last, and die?"

"Oh, no, no! How could I call that good? This is the sad thing—Your poor sister is dead, of cholera."

"Poor little Blanche," he said, after a long pause. She didn't know how unjust—no matter now."

"Mr. Verney *is* dead too, of the same thing."

Cecil's illness had taken the passion out of him, and he did not seem to imagine Verney's death could have any results for himself. He only said "It *is* sad—poor Ju!" and closed his eyes.

Then Dolly gathered up her strength, took his hand, and kissing it, said softly, looking full at him with her true, loving eyes.

"He is dead. But, dear, dear Cecil, he has confessed all, and cleared *you*."

Kilmurray gazed at her immovably, unbelievingly for a minute, then he began to tremble all over: his face changed, his lips quivered, his eyes filled, and with a weary cry he stretched out his arms to her and took her to his breast at last.

From that happy hour he mended rapidly, and though medical authority pronounced his constitution irretrievably weakened by want and anxiety, it said also, if duly cared for, there was no reason Kilmurray should not live as long as more robust persons.

As the spring advanced, Miss Ashton and Dolly took him to town, and despite his newly acquired eligibility, and the virtuous indignation of the world, insisted on his sharing their home till he was quite restored to health. Here new and old friends (?) flocked to see him, amongst them Mrs. Ormonde, Colonel Offham, and Brington, who made a journey from his remote estate for no other purpose than to witness Cecil's complete rehabilitation. He was introduced to Dolly, who received him with as many blushes as much radiant confusion, as though she were seventeen again. He said to her, good humoredly, as he held her hand—

"This young lady—saving your presence, Cis—is the only person who had or has the slightest reason to take credit to herself for her conduct in the old affair of the £500. As to the rest of us, we were brutes or fools and deserve that you should cut us now. But if—as I am sure she will—she makes half as good a wife as she has proved herself to be a friend, you're a lucky fellow."

Mrs. Ormonde also called upon Dolly, and was much more respectful to Cecil than of yore. If he had had to play for her now, she would have given him a guinea, instead of half-a-crown, because it was no longer a matter of necessity to him. He forgave her freely, though he laughed at her for keeping him hungry and cold once; but Dolly was less placable, and said to him afterwards, with a little air of sternness, "I can't forget how she let you go away when to move *might* have killed you. No, dear Cecil, I don't like her, and we won't know her when we're married, please."

"I don't want to know or see any one but you, darling, now or then."

"Oh Cecil, it's so dear of you to say so—but—"

"Whose was the only little heart that was always true, Dolly?"

"But it was no merit in me, because I loved you."

"My own love!"

Colonel Offham presented himself in his turn, looking scarcely a day older than when he had pronounced stern sentence on the man he now approached in rather a shame-faced way. He began to allude awkwardly to the unpleasant past; but Kilmurray interrupted him with a smile—

"Do you remember giving me a shilling in the Arcade, Colonel? You did me a good turn, for I was awfully hungry."

"By George! I never was so shocked in my life as to see who the hungry fellow was. I would have caught you if I could. I repented."

"We will let *all* bygones be bygones," said Cecil, holding out his hand kindly. "We all did what we believed our duty, I hope, and for the best."

The Colonel gripped the offered fingers in silence, and a reflection arose in his mind, more forcible than elegant, that the black sheep of the 130th had proved the best mutton of the flock after all.

Soon after, Cecil and Dolly were married, in a very quiet way, for his health was still delicate, and yet, as he told her, he could not have it put off longer.

"I am a fool; but I am afraid to let you out of my sight," he said. "Besides, we've lost eight years, little one, that we ought to have had together."

So Dolly was unmaidenly, and said, "Yes," without pressing. They went to a little quiet watering place for their honeymoon, where Kilmurray was shockingly idle and unspeakably happy. After his hard life, he might perhaps be excused for thoroughly enjoying the change.

One day, as he lay in the shadow of the cliff, with Dolly at his side, working, he spoke, almost for the first time, of that "old affair" which had nearly cost him so much.

Under the summer sunshine, the dancing waters lapping idly the flashing pebbles, the blue ocean distance melting into misty glowing sky, with the smiling peace of that fair world before his eyes, the delirious ecstacies of a lark that had risen from the fields behind him, and was poised in worship and praise, somewhere near heaven, in his ears, Cecil Kilmurray remembered keenly, yet painlessly now, the heavy storm, the solitary night, the deadly silence and desolation of his late years.

"Dolly," he said, suddenly, "Was I wrong after all? I told a lie, but it was to save that poor lad from ruin, in this world and the next. The life I led would have destroyed him body and soul. It almost did me. Then he had been engaged to poor Blanche so long, and I did not dream you *loved* me. I thought it a mere childish fancy that you would get over. I was wrong in that, thank God! Was I wrong altogether, you wise child?"

"Indeed, love," she answered, dropping her work, and laying her hand tenderly on his, "I can't tell. But we do know it is not our *doing* right, but our trying to do right, that really matters. It is the love and the struggle God looks at, I think, not the success.

"My darling, how little I thought when I lay down to die on that dreary common, forsaken and hopeless, that I should be so blessed as I am now. Oh, Dolly, my own wife, your face, your voice were my salvation when I was at the last ebb, and could endure no more. Dearest, how happy we are now! How, how thankful!"

His voice failed, he laid his head back on her lap, and closed his lids to keep in the tears that would rise.

And Dolly, with one hand locked fast in his, the other fondly stroking his forehead, with her clear eyes looking far away, and her tender grave voice, a little tremulous, said softly—

"Yes—we see the end of the Lord. God is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. O Cecil, dear, dear husband, isn't it true?"

THE END.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS. A Narrative of 1757. By J. FENNIMORE COOPER. Illustrated from Drawings by F. O. C. Darley. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. This, one of the finest of Cooper's Indian stories, comes to us in a very attractive form, as the first volume of a new edition of the celebrated novelist's works. It is filled with a number of spirited engravings from designs by Darley.

PUBLIC AND PARLOR READINGS: Prose and Poetry, for the use of Reading Clubs, and for Public and Social Entertainment. Miscellaneous. Edited by LEWIS B. MONROE. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia.

THE SOPHOMORES OF RADCLIFFE: or JAMES THAYTON AND HIS BOSOM FRIENDS. No. 2 of the "Whispering Pine" series. By ELIJAH KELLOGG, author of "Lion Ben of Elm Island," "Arthur Brown, the Young Captain," etc., etc. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia.

BEDE'S CHARITY. By HESBA STRETTON, author of "Max Kromer," "Nellie's Dark Days," "Alone in London," etc. Published by Dodd & Mead, New York, and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia.

THE EDUCATIONAL YEAR BOOK. 1872. A Hand-book of Reference, comprising a Digest of American Public School Laws, Systems of Instruction, and interesting matters pertaining to Schools and Colleges, ranging from Profession Anecdotes to Educational Statistics. Published annually by A. S. Barnes & Co., New York; and also for sale by A. S. Barnes & Co., 822 Chestnut street, Philadelphia.

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY for March, leads off with an article by George Alfred Townsend, entitled "The Chesapeake Peninsula," which gives us a glimpse into a picturesque and romantic region of the country hitherto almost unknown to outsiders. Charles Dudley Warner's third instalment of the "Black Log Studies," with its quiet home chatting and philosophising upon literary and artistic matters, is quite delightful reading. The number also contains the conclusion of "Wilfred Cumbermede," "The Heart of Arabia," by Bayard Taylor, "In the Brook," "The False Claim of Mormonism," etc., etc. Published by Scribner & Co., New York.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for March. This number contains the continuation of "Septimus Felton," "The Watch of Boon Island," a poem by Mrs. Celia Thaxter, "A Comedy of Terrors," by James De Mille, "Out of the Window," by Norah Perry, "King Volmer and Elsie," by John G. Whittier, "How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar," by Bret Harte, "Spiritualism New and Old," etc., etc. Published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW for January, 1872. American Edition. This number contains, among other good literary matter, "Taylor on Primitive Culture," "Railway Organization in the Late War," "Mr. Browning's Balaustion," "Tyerman's Life of John Wesley," etc., etc. Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philada.

THE GALAXY for March, contains "Corea: What Shall We Do With Her?" "The Accolade," a poem by Bayard Taylor, "My Life on the Plains," "Fifteen Years a Shakeress," "Miss Anchesson's Blunder," "A Great Lawsuit and a Field Fight," etc., etc. Published by Sheldon & Co., New York.

THE HALF-YEARLY ABSTRACT OF THE MEDICAL SCIENCES. Being a Digest of British and Continental Medicine, and of the Progress of Medicine and the Collateral Sciences. Edited by William Domett Stone, M. D., F. R. S. January, 1872. Published by Henry C. Lea, Philada.

THE water furnished by the different companies of London has recently been the subject of examination. A comparison was made with a sample of London sewage, which had been allowed to soak through five feet of earth, and the sewage was found to contain a smaller portion of injurious elements than the drinking water. A comparison was also made with samples of the water taken from fifty condemned shallow wells, and the examination showed that the water of only ten of the condemned wells contained a larger proportion of organic impurities than that daily furnished for use by three of the principal companies. Only two companies supply nearly pure water. It is remarked as a singular fact that the companies notorious for supplying the worst water have the largest number of consumers.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

ANOTHER ROBBERY BY OUTLAWS.

On the night of Friday, February 16, Lowry's gang of outlaws entered Lumberton, in Robeson county, North Carolina, stole two iron safes, one from McLeod's store and the other from the Sheriff's office, and got away unmolested. The Sheriff's safe was dropped in the street unopened, but McLeod's was rifled of $22,000 in money, most of which had been placed in it by different persons for safe-keeping. On Saturday morning, when the robbery was discovered, a Deputy Sheriff's posse pursued and overtook the robbers, but the latter escaped into the woods. In addition to the money, about $1000 worth of merchandise was taken from McLeod's store. The State Government offers a reward of $35,000 for the capture of the Lowrys, "dead or alive."

THE BLOCKADE ON THE UNION PACIFIC.

Eight trains on the Union Pacific—the first in 28 days—arrived at Ogden, Utah, on Saturday, February 17, the blockade having been temporarily raised. Among the methods used by the passengers to while away the monotony of their journey, were indignation meetings and shovelling of snow, the latter being a universal recreation. One death and two births also occurred, and a number of passenger were injured by collisions. Much of the detention is attributed to the incompetency of the railroad officials and suits for damages are threatened. The blockade between Medicine Bow and Rawlins was renewed by another storm on Saturday night, but three or four days afterward a rapid thaw set in, and three trains from the West passed Cheyenne on the 20th instant. The thaw however gives rise to new apprehensions. Great damage to the road is expected from floods, which may lead to further delay. In previous years, one-fourth of the present snowfall has caused detentions lasting several days.

The Grand Duke Alexis left New Orleans on the 19th, and went to Mobile, where he met with a cordial reception. He then went to Pensacola, where the Russian fleet awaits him.

At Lowell, Massachusetts, on Sunday evening, February 18, Charles E. Kimball, aged 19, was shot through the lungs by Charles A. Watts, aged 16, and is in a critical condition. Watts has been arrested. Jealousy was the cause, a young lady having discarded Watts for Kimball.

At Bowerstown, Ohio, on Sunday, George Clark shot and dangerously wounded his sister because she threw snow at him. He was arrested.

Seth Johnson, the embezzling Treasury clerk, was arraigned in the Criminal Court at Washington yesterday. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to one year's imprisonment, and to pay the amount stolen—$40,000.

Thomas A. Scott has been elected President of the Texas Pacific Railroad, in place of Marshall O. Roberts, resigned.

The Hon. Charles Francis Adams arrived at New York on the morning of Feb. 21, from England, in the steamer Algeria.

The cause of an extended sickness at Harrisburg recently arose from the sewerage drainings being introduced into the water pipes of that city.

John O'Connor, the paymaster's clerk, charged with embezzling $10,000 of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company, was arrested by the Chief of Police of Savannah, Ga., as he was disembarking from the steamship Magnolia, which left New York on the 10th. The trunk which he took with him was the means of tracing his whereabouts. All the money has been recovered. The transaction created intense excitement. He has been sentenced to sixty days' imprisonment, and fined fifty dollars, with costs of prosecution.

The carriage formerly used by Gen. Washington was one of the features of the procession of the order of United American Mechanics, in New York.

Spotted Tail is reported safe and sound on a Government reservation.

The trial of Stokes is progressing.

Mr. Brown, of New York, a blockaded passenger on the Pacific Railroad, who arrived at San Francisco on Monday, Feb. 19, died the same day from the effects of fatigue and exposure.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue has begun to send out the income tax blanks. About nineteen tons of blanks are required.

During the snow storm of Tuesday week, in the Northwest, two women were frozen to death near Beaver Falls, Minn. They were sisters, and went out to look after stock, the husband of the elder being absent, when the storm came up, and they perished on the prairie. Several persons also perished near Windom during the same storm.

Two inmates of the National Asylum, at Milwaukee, named McCargue and Cavanaugh, were found dead in a ravine in the woods, near the Asylum, on Wednesday. They had been missing for over a month, and were only discovered by the melting of the snow which covered them.

FOREIGN NEWS.

A WOULD-BE ASSASSIN.

It was officially announced in Berlin, on the morning of Feb. 22, that an apothecary, who resides in the city of Posen, had been arrested the day before, on suspicion of contemplating the assassination of Bismarck. The man is a Pole and a fanatical Catholic, and had formerly served in the Papal Zouaves. He came from Posen to Berlin a few days before, and while on the way threatened to take the life of the Prince. Upon his arrival at the capital, a pistol was found on the person of the prisoner, which showed beyond doubt that he fully meditated carrying out his design.

Much excitement exists at Paris over the discovery of the last Bonapartist conspiracy.

The Prince of Wales intends to go to Yarmouth to recuperate.

Hon. George H. Boker, American Minister to Turkey, was on Sunday, the 18th inst., presented to the Chief Executive of France.

The injuries which Ristori, the great tragedienne, received in the recent railway accident, near Perugia, are more serious than were at first supposed, and will render her unable to attend to her professional duties for a long time.

Extraordinary preparations are making in London for the thanksgiving services at St. Paul's Cathedral, and the royal procession thereto and therefrom.

Emperor William of Germany has been indisposed for several days.

☞ A lady has just sent us a basket of fruit, the very sight of which, she thinks, must make us smack our lips. We thank her, and would greatly prefer smacking hers.

☞ They have interviewed the female physician in Springfield, Mass. "There is a combination of tender womanliness and enduring strength about her that makes a person believe in her at once." She has "steadfast, hazel eyes," which "look honestly and fearlessly out from under the brown lashes." She is further blessed with a "firm mouth," that "softens now and then into a sunshiny smile." Since her assumption of the official robe—for she is the accredited city physician—poor young men with sickness have notably increased.

☞ In Salisbury, England, there is an eccentric gentleman named John Bull, who insists upon wearing a dress in the fashion of the time of King Alfred, and when recently charged with indecent dressing, quoted in his defence a statue of that monarch, which says that "any dress that covers the body from the neck to below the knee cannot be indecent."

THE MICROSCOPE IN DISEASE.

The cause of chills and fever is at length satisfactorily explained by Dr. Hall, in his Journal of Health. The cause of this disease has for ages been attributed to miasm, an emanation from the earth, so subtile in its character that for more than a century the greatest skill of the ablest chemists was not able to detect its nature or define its quality. The most searching analyses of air from deadly localities were made, without success. But at length the aid of the microscope has been invoked, and the result has been the discovery of multitudes of living things in this miasmatic air.

Dr. Salisbury took bottles of air from the banks of a Southern bayou to Chicago, where they were placed in a man's chamber. The result was that the man was taken with chills and fever in a few days, and those living things were found on his tongue and in his mouth, in his chamber and in the bottles, and nowhere else in the city. It has not yet been definitely ascertained whether this life is animal or vegetable, but the fact that it exists has been satisfactorily demonstrated. Just here the question arises, whether similar microscopic investigation would not lead to the discovery of the direct cause of smallpox and cholera, in regard to which there are so many different theories, though all seem agreed that the cause, whatever it may be, exists in the atmosphere.

☞ A child at Savannah received a cut under the chin in a fall, which continued to bleed in spite of every remedy, causing its death through exhaustion in ten days.

☞ The latest conundrum we have read is from a New York paper: "Where ought we always to find the milk of human kindness? In the pale of the church."

☞ The latest report about Dr. Livingstone is that after the vast amount of newspaper obituary of him, he will not have the face to come back alive.

☞ A traveller was making a pedestrian tour of the Alps, when suddenly, in a narrow path, he came face to face with a large brown bear. He drew a revolver and was about to fire, when, to his amazement, the bear cried out, "Don't fire!" It turned out that the pretended bear was a man employed by some guides, who sent him out dressed in a bear skin when they had a timid traveller to escort. At a preconcerted spot the bear would rush upon them, and when put to flight by the exertions of the guides, the traveller never failed to reward their courage and devotion by a handsome present, of which the bear received a liberal share.

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The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 1800 head, and sold at 7½@8c. 200 Cows brought $30@50 ₩ head. Sheep—16,000 head were disposed of at 6@10c. ₩ lb. 3700 Hogs sold at $7,75@7,50 ₩ 100 lbs net.

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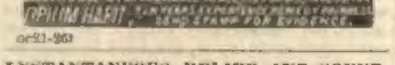

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WIT AND HUMOR.

QUILL SCRATCHES.

BY MAX ADELER.

A young man in Sunbury was fishing in the canal one day last fall, when the cook of a passing canal-boat tumbled overboard. He plunged in and rescued her, and she thanked him, asked his name, climbed upon the deck of her vessel, and sailed away. Last week the youth was surprised by a visit from the maiden and her father. The old man rushed up, seized his hand, and said: "You saved the girl, and she's yourn. Take her, my son—take her and be happy, with a father's blessing. No man shall say that I'm ungrateful." The maiden moved forward as if to seek an embrace, but the gallant youth dashed through the window and fled, pursued by the parent and his child. He has since written home from the far West to say that, if he ever perceives another canal-boat cook in the canal, he will tie a cargo of anvils to her neck to help hold her down.

Here is some poetry which we are not so sure about. When we first read it, our disposition was to condemn it as chaotic bosh, and to rend it at once into eternal flinders; but, after looking over it again, we thought it might perhaps be good; and although we have since studied it ceaselessly night and day, under a microscope and with the naked eye, we are actually unable to determine finally whether it is idiotic drivel, penned by a delirious lunatic, or some kind of surprising poetry, filled with delicious music, by a bard who sings for the ear of future generations. Here is what he says—we give but one verse:

"And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!"

We acknowledge that we don't know what it means. We emphatically give it up. But it seems to us that if the Franklin Institute would take hold of that poetry, and appoint a committee on it, and take it around to some good chemist and have it carefully analyzed, some important results might follow. We would be willing to give up paying our butcher's bill for the sake of getting at the bottom, as it were, of that language.

A correspondent asks if we will be kind enough to furnish him with some information concerning the revolution in Venezuela. Certainly we will, if it is wanted by our readers. But we warn them that if we begin the story, and get it under way, they will probably find themselves fit subjects for a commission *de lunatico inquirendo* before long. Because the last time we undertook to write up the revolution in Venezuela we began three hundred years back, and before we were half-way through we got about eight thousand revolutions running into and overlapping each other, and got so mixed that we ourselves couldn't tell which revolution was which; while the Don Leon Maria Guzman de Blanco and the Hidalgo de Pedro de Antequera y Ximeneses and the Don Miguel y Francisco Pecheco Diaz Sanchez de Fernandezes were so jumbled and jammed together that nobody could say for certain which of them was the man who did any given thing, or whether any of them was a human being, or the revolution itself, or some kind of a double-barreled, breech-loading, back-action, repeating Paixhan gun. It was awful. We spent years trying to straighten out that narrative, and it reads yet as wildly and deliriously as some of the editorials in the papers which steal these items. But we will do it. We will begin to publish another account in this paper if there is a demand for it. All we ask is that the people who want it will publish their names, so that if anybody becomes frenzied from perusal of the narrative they will know where to go to wreak vengeance without hunting up us with guns and bowie knives. —*Sunday Dispatch.*

WITTICISMS.

A Correspondent of THE POST sends us the following batch of witticisms, conundrums, etc.:—

HARD ON MR. SHAD.—*Mr. Shad*—"Miss Angelina, you had better decide; your father is tired of feeding you I know."

Angelina—"Mr. Shad, I am afraid that would not mend the matter, for then he'd have us both to feed."

A QUESTION to ask a hungry boy—"Whether it would be more pleasant to be a pioneer, than to be near a pie?"

CONSOLATION for the poor man. He is not bored with friends.

A QUESTION to ask a hen-pecked husband. "What should your wife do to resemble a Government defaulter?" Why, peck you late. (Peculate.)

HERE is one I originated in my sleep. I must have conundrum on the brain:

Why is the yelling of a horse-jockey trying to sell, like a periodical storm between the tropics? Why, because it's a trade wind.

WHICH is the lamest mountain in the world? Olympus, of course.

JONESBORO ITEMS.—Jonesboro has some very queer folks in it—and it is small for its age. We have one man who is so close fisted, that when he gets hold of a silver quarter, the eagle screams out for liberty or lager-beer.

Another is so very considerate and tender-hearted, that when he pens his hogs, he renders them so uncomfortable, that when he goes to kill, death will be a relief to them.

The verdict of a Coroner's Jury here, over a man thrown against a lamp-post, was, "That he came to his end by being too well posted."

TOO LATE.

I send you an anecdote which is true, but has never been in print. I am acquainted with the gentleman that was connected with the affair:

"While the 60th Regiment Tennessee Volunteers, (Confederate) was at Vicksburg, a man we will call A. (as that is his initial) was sent to the hospital unable for duty. As it happened, he and his neighbor invalid swapped beds, but did not change their cards, denoting their names, disease, &c., so that A.'s card was left on the other's bed. That night the other died; and the report went to headquarters, that A. was dead, and ready to burry. A. found out the error, and called the Irish nurse, and told him to go and have the report straightened up, for it was not him that was dead.

"'Ah! says Pat, "be jabbers, it's too late to fax it now, for the coffin will be afther ye in a few minutes.'

"A. enjoyed the joke, notwithstanding death was so near."

A CALIFORNIA STORY.

A Sacramento paper says:—"A number of sheep on Patton's ranch, north of the American, were not sheared last fall, and hence their fleece is very long. During the fall it got very dirty, and probably grass and other seeds fell into it. At all events, since rain commenced to fall, grass, with blades say two inches long, is growing luxuriantly out of the wool, and the sheep travel about carrying their pastures upon their backs. Any grass which the sheep cannot reach itself a friend is allowed to nibble, and he or she reciprocates."

☞ Woman in Rondout, N. Y., goes to church in a silk dress which she bought of Fisk when he was a travelling peddlar.

INTERESTING DEVOTEES.

THERESA—"No, Charles—never! I have long determined to devote my life to Charity; in fact, to become a Sister in an Anglican Nunnery."

CHARLES—"Well, if you do, I'll bury myself for the rest of my miserable days in a—in a— a Monkery!"

HERE.

BY ROSE TERRY.

When night comes brooding o'er me,
Like a prison's dreary cell;
And its visions rise before me,
With dread no speech may tell;
When alone with my only longing,
And the darkening spell of fear,
I watch the sad stars thronging,
Till the beams of dawn appear.
Then, like some silver chimes,
Come back the old, old times—
The dear old times, my darling,
The living, loving times!

Unsleeping, I remember
The days that all are gone,
Like June dreams in December,
Or flowers when Summer's done;
The times that are never over,
For they live in heart and brain,
And, like kisses from a lover,
Their spell comes back again.
Like a song of magic rhymes,
Return the dear old times—
The old, old times, my darling,
The living, loving times!

This is my lone life's treasure,
That none can take away—
Remembrance without measure
Of every vanished day;
Of love-light round me streaming,
Of tender lips and eyes;
Awake I lie, yet dreaming,
Nor sleep till day shall rise.
Like a bee in blossomed limes,
I live in those old times—
The times you know, my darling,
The living, loving times!

Cold are the skies above me,
The earth is wrapped in snow,
And it still, as then, you love me,
Alas! I cannot know—
Silence between us lying,
More chill than Winter's cold,
And my heart like a baby crying
For its mother's wonted hold;
But I breathe the Summer's prime,
Remembering that old time,
Though you forget it, darling,
The living, loving time!

—*Galaxy.*

Leaves from a Pocket Diary.

No. 15.

LEG BAIL.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

Among the five thousand and five hundred dollar bails that give liberty and license too often to the rogues of the day, not only binding them to keep the piece or slice which they have already secured, but to try for more pieces and slices, there is occasionally mentioned leg bail. You can sort of manage this last named bail without calling on your friends.

I am going to tell you of a race I had once, Lieutenant S—— went on jocularly which will show you how a man's occupation may be mistaken by a discriminating public, and his character be blackened as effectually as if he ran for Congress.

I was in one of the border States in the summer of 186—. I found myself suddenly unhorsed in a rough stretch of country. The animal had a stumble, and lamed herself so that it was impossible to get on with her. I had invested my last dollar of ready money in her purchase, and being an entire stranger in those parts, of course I could neither borrow a beast to finish my journey, nor buy one on credit, so I must get on afoot as fast as possible, having a very important engagement to meet Col. L. C. Hyde fifty miles farther on. I wanted to get a chance to distribute government funds by means of an Indian Agency or some other public office, and Col. Hyde had used his influence to some account, as I judged by his imperative summons for me to meet him at T. on the 15th. On the 14th I had found myself unhorsed, as I tell you, and completely at a loss how to get forward I was too nervous to wait for something to turn up, to help me forward, and so put on afoot.

I loitered around the small village at which I had arrived about sunset, inquiring casually as to the state and standing of horse-flesh, but could obtain no hope in this quarter. I repaired at a late hour of the evening to the only inn in the place. Here getting some supper I proposed resting myself upon a settee in the bar-room for a few hours, calculating as soon as I had rested somewhat to start forward again. With this idea I paid for my supper and a cigar, and lay down.

After the people had gone off, or to bed, I fell asleep, and so it was about two o'clock when I started. I was right glad of my early start, as the day proved when a few hours old, remarkably sultry. As it progressed towards noon, the heat became intense, and that is the only tangible reason that I can give why I so persistently shunned the highway, and risked losing a chance to ride; yet for fear of losing my route I made short cuts down close to the road, taking the long gaze of a civil engineer once in awhile to be sure where I should strike if I cut across some curve to retain the shelter of the trees. To this day I think that there was something strange in my conduct at that time, but I got the explanation afterwards in a way that made me believe in the theory of guardian spirits moving us by their will instead of our own.

I had placed the remainder of my supper in my pocket the evening before, and so about noon, in a clump of bushes close beside the highway, I sat down to partake of my luncheon. I was effectually concealed from observation, although I had not the least thought of being interrupted, in that solitary place, therefore I was quite surprised on hearing the sound of horses' feet ascending the rise in the road, close by me. Peering cautiously out, I saw two men approaching, whose steeds were sweating furiously.

"They had got up to a hundred dollars at eight o'clock this morning," one of the men said to the other. "Shouldn't wonder if it is a hundred and fifty by this time."

"Nor I. Quite a slice for whoever gets it."

"Let's see—gray pants, short black sack-coat and blue cloth cap."

"That's it; thick set fellow, with black moustache."

"Thunderbolts of Jove!" I muttered to myself—"what's up? They've got me photographed to perfection."

During this soliloquy I lost a word or two of the men laboring up the hill nearly abreast of me.

"Hung round a long while, yesterday, inquiring for horses—deuced stupid that nobody had their wits about them. Made a good haul in Bracket's store—four thousand, they say, and Peters's horses. The finest lot of animals this side the Cottonwood."

Something more was said which I could not distinguish. Then—

"Laid down in the bar-room, and left some time between twelve and three this morning."

By the beard of Mahomet, they *were* discussing my veritable self, and in the light of burglar and horse thief. My limbs shook—every individual hair of my head arose and stood on its own responsibility. The blue heavens and the green earth ran around loose for a time before my eyes. Startled, was I? In truth I was. I knew the law of a new country. Suspected and caught, there would be no waiting to prove or disapprove identity. It would be "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether." You would be weighed where your head instead of your feet would kick the beam.

It was evidently one of those singular coincidences, where my suspicions—as the people now thought—questions, were afterwards explained by some scoundrels raiding in upon the place and committing a double crime. And the whole country would be astir ere long, and for me to be caught would be death.

I took to the cover of the woods and got on as rapidly as possible. The fact of my having neither goods, money, nor horses, would avail me nothing. My inability to tell where the things were, would only prove to them one fact, that I had confederates who had made off in another direction with the missing property.

When I came to open country I got across it with nervous haste—and several times on sweeping down towards the road, so as to make sure of my route, I heard the trot of horses' feet—but whether it was the real author of the mischief, or officers armed with the law of might, I could not ascertain without risk of discovery.

If ever I was glad to see fiery old Sol head steadily down the western slope, I was on that particular occasion.

Night would afford some protection; at least I should try it on the highway, which would give me a chance to run or fight, without cutting my throat with wild vines, or tripping my heels upon roots and logs.

The sun slowly settled and finally dropped below the ground circle of the Great Pavillion; and as dusk crept on, I came into the road. Once or twice an approaching team, doubtless a farmer's wagon, dropped me down like a spiral spring man with a brick in his hat. Up and on again, although by this time my over-worked joints entered a protest against farther motion. It was nearly ten o'clock, I made out by my watch, lighting a match, and I was getting desperately in earnest in my hopes for something to turn up to get me along faster.

It was about this time that a strange, melancholy echo reached me. I gave a sort of whistle, and moved on as briskly as possible. After the space of a moment or two it came again, tremblingly breaking out on the utter calmness like a cry of ill omen. "The call of a wild animal," I said "and the answer of its mate. I shall hear no more of it."

Two minutes elapsed, and then the faint, far-off trembling echo came. No break after that, but as even as the regular beat of a musician's baton, it came.

"O-w-w! o-w-w-h! o-w-w-w-h!"

With the sudden shock, and with nearly the power of the red-hot thunderbolt, the awful truth burst upon me. I had given no heed at the time, but now I remembered the talk that I had heard in the village where I stopped the night before, of a Georgia man, then in the place; and the commenting as to his singular fancy in carrying, as a companion, the fierce, red-mouthed bloodhound. I had heard the southern bloodhound when in full chase of some runaway; but still, there was a problem to solve. Had I left any article of mine at the inn. I thought rapidly and searched rapidly, soon making the discovery that I had lost one of my gloves. It had doubtless fallen from my pocket in the bar-room, and the brute had taken the scent from it. I took in my desperate situation in a moment, ably prompted by the nearer and more distinct, and foreboding cry.

You've seen the lodge poles of the Indians just when they were placed to represent a pair of widespread tongs? Well, for the next three-quarters of an hour after the identity of that sound was made known to my senses, an interested person taking a side view, would have told you that a pair of animated human tongs measured the route between the Shawnee bottom and the site of old Fort W—— without once picking up a brand.

I was going in to save myself by *leg-bail*. I can joke now, but the running streams of perspiration at the time proved that I considered it far from a joke then.

Breathless at last, I paused to listen. There it was, bearing steadily along my trail, the keen-nosed brute, and perhaps a score of graduates under Judge Lynch.

Recovering my breath, I began again to measure the route, this time extending my compasses to their utmost. It seemed as if I should never again come upon a human habitation. Could I do so I should make a stand, and argue my case with a pair of quick-spoken fellows that hung at my belt.

Nearer and nearer. I am of opinion that government offices fell below par, and mar too, for that matter, just then. I was now so worn out that I began to feel desperate—as if I hardly cared what the end might be—but the instinct of self-preservation urged me on. A very few moments more would bring a crisis. Ha! just before me loomed up the out-buildings of a settler. Scrambling upon a low shed, I calculated to make my stand there, but my extreme exhaustion lost me my hold, and I slid feet foremost into the slumbers of a mammoth sow and her row of musical progeny. The rabid beast made a bite at my hand, lacerating the flesh until the blood ran up my sleeve as I attempted again to spring upon the shed.

At that moment the pursuing animal broke from the cover of the woods, three-quarters of a mile away. I remembered then what the southern negroes had told me, of how fresh blood dropped in the path would throw the hounds off the trail. I held my bleeding hand over the side of the yard from which I had leaped, and let the red tide flow for the space of two minutes, kicking out vigorously meanwhile to hinder the huge porcine from acting over the old role of the whale and Jonah.

Then I flashed over the other side of the yard and made for a rough edge of timber, where some trees had been felled, and settling down in a hollow made by an overturned stump, I awaited the result of my experiment.

Five mounted men rushed up to the settlers' cabin with a loud halloo. The hound had stopped by the hog-yard, and seemed to be at a loss as to his course.

"Call up the dog, Dan," said one. "We'll have a bite of something to eat, and rest the animals an hour or two, and then push on again." The pioneer aroused himself and admitted them, and getting upon my feet I saw by the candle lighted within, that a drink was being prepared; and with the courage derived from desperation, I dashed for the stable, and lighting a match discovered a strong horse in the stall. While the horses at the door were pounding uneasily, I backed the noble brute out from his shelter, and getting past the window where I saw the potations going down the thirsty throats, noticed one of the men give the restless hound a quieting lash of the whip. Then I was on the animal's back, and using the point of my knife for a spur, I dashed madly over the desolate road, expecting every moment to hear the sounds of pursuit; but, probably, dabbling with their drink, and mindful of their hot and weary steeds, the men did not discover the loss of the horse until towards daylight. By that time I was within five miles of Fort Wayne, the unbroken gallop of my powerful steed devouring the ground like a tornado. The early stirring people around the Fort, might have got the impression that I was Wild Bill or some other border hero, for I was both hatless and coatless, and grey as a pomade of sweat and dust could make me.

I found Col. Hyde, but not being able to improve my personal appearance much, was forced to put forth this conundrum to him:

"Hadn't I as good a right to run for office as any other man?"

I sent back the old settler's horse, and twenty dollars to sharpen the shoes that I'd smoothed upon the occasional rocks during my seventeen miles' ride. I shouldn't want, though, as much as I approve of *leg-bail*, to agree to lay out the western territory with home-made compasses.

Answers to Correspondents.

ADDITIONS TO CLUBS.—A correspondent asks "If additions can be made to clubs at the same rate." Yes.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—All manuscripts sent to us should have the price marked upon them if any is desired. Writers of no literary reputation should be satisfied at first if a good field is afforded them to display their talents and gain a name. We do not guarantee the safe return of manuscript, but endeavor to return it safely when desired, and when the requisite stamps are sent. Articles may be good of their kind, and not be suitable for our purposes. Experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their articles prompt attention.

Do not write to us asking whether you shall send on your manuscripts for examination—but send them on at once

SUBSCRIBER (Grand Rapids, Mich.) writes: "Please state if there is any way of removing superfluous hair so that it will stay removed. On the back of my fingers small hairs grow, and having heard that pulling them up by the roots would stop their growth, I did so, but they grew stiffer than ever. If there is any known depilatory that will remove them, please publish it. Also, can one depend on ——— Chemist, of Philadelphia, who advertises in the Post." You had better leave the hairs alone. They will do no harm where they are, and you will find it no easy matter effectually to remove them. Where nature is obstinately bent on having her own way, as she seems to be in your case, it is best to let well enough alone. We cannot vouch for the statements of any of our advertisers. Our mission is simply to bring buyers and sellers together, and allow them to deal with each other. The simplest and best means to discover the reliability of any advertiser is to apply to him personally, and use your own powers of discrimination as to his statements.

J. A. P. (Pittsburg, Pa.), writes: "Is it consanguineous for two persons to marry where their fathers are cousins?" You do not say what the exact relationship between the fathers is, whether a first, second or more removed cousinship. In any case the degree of relationship between the children is not sufficiently close for it to form any necessary bar to their marriage. The principal objection to the marriage of cousins refers to the case of first cousinship.

E. W. H. (New Florence), writes: "Seeing in your valuable columns a cure for cancer, will you please to tell me through your correspondence column what wild tea is, and whether it has any other name?" There may be some plant having such a local name, but there is none so named in botanical works. There are several plants, besides the true tea plant, used for making tea. In some parts of North America the leaves of the partridge berry are used for this purpose. Whether this is the plant referred to or not we are unable to say.

JONAS (Washington, D. C.,) writes: "You must excuse me if I ask what may seem to be foolish questions—for many of those things which seem most foolish, are often the most difficult to understand. For instance 'Unlicked Cub,' I know what that means in common speech, but would like to know what it came from. I am also curious to know how the cat came to be called Puss. Also, will you please give me the origin of some other common names of animals—such as Reynard for the fox, Brute for the bear, Chanticleer for the cock, &c. I hope I am not too lengthy. I have other questions I would like to ask, but will not trespass further on your patience." Your first phrase comes from an old idea in vogue before Natural History became a science. Pliny says that bears are born as oysters, hairless, shapeless lumps of white flesh, and have to be licked into shape. The application is evident. The word Puss comes from the Celtic word for cat, which in the Irish is Puss. Similar household names for the cat occur throughout Europe. It is probable that the cat, which came from the East, brought the name Puss as one of its original names. In the Afghan it is called Pushu; in the Persian, Pushak. It has a similar name among some of our Indian tribes. Reynard, Brute, Chanticleer, and some other common names for animals, are the names by which those animals were called in the old fable of "Reynard the Fox," which in the Middle Ages was such a favorite in Europe.

S. B. (Pennsylvania) writes: "I am a constant reader of your valuable paper, and like it very much. I want to consult you about writing poetry, and I send you a piece as a specimen. I do not ask you to publish it. But if you think it is worth publishing, or if by practice I could write something that would be worth it, if it would not be too much trouble, please let me know through your correspondence column. I come to you because I have confidence in you and your opinion." If S. B. will try and compose something that she may think worth publishing, and send it to us, we will be happy to sit in judgement upon it. In the present case she simply claims to have written the piece sent, not to have composed it, which was exactly our opinion on reading it. As we did so there came faintly to us "voices from the shadowy legions" of the poets dead and gone. The whole tone of the poem is familiar to us, though we cannot just now place it. We may, of course be mistaken, but if a writer sends us a piece of fine poetic power, and with the rhyme, rhythm, and general handling of an expert at versification, and withal of familiar tone, and yet claims to be an embryo poetess, she must expect us to doubt her honesty. If she can satisfy us of its originality, we shall be happy to publish it.

UNSOPHISTICATED (Columbia, S. C.,) writes: "Being a constant reader of your columns I thought I would ask you a few questions, which I hope you will be kind enough to answer. 1st. Should a lady take a gentleman's arm when he escorts her to the carriage? 2d. What should you advise me to do when you think a gentleman to whom you are engaged, and whom you love, is trying to lead you on, and at last to flirt with you? Now if I was a flirt myself I could turn the tables on him; but as I am opposed to all such, I am in a sad predicament, and would like your advice on the subject. 3d. What is the lowest price that diamond rings can be bought for? I want a handsome one. 4th. When you ask a gentleman for his picture and he asks yours in return, and you do not want him to have it, but want his, what is the best answer to make so as to get his and not give him yours? 5th. What do you think of my handwriting?" 1st. It would be perfectly correct to take the gentleman's arm, though it is not absolutely required. 2d. Can you conceive no other means of letting him know the state of your feelings except by engaging in a flirtation? The best course of proceeding for you to take depends so greatly on his character that we do not know how to advise. What is medicine to one man is poison to another, you know. Some would be won back by affection, some be frightened back by coldness, some reasoned back by a frank explanation of your sentiments. You will know best what course is likely to prove efficacious. 3d. It depends very much on what you would consider a handsome ring. You could get a very pretty cluster ring for from one to two hundred dollars. For a good solitaire you would have to pay considerably higher, as clusters are largely made up of splits and inferior stones. 4th. If you ask a gentleman for his picture, and he retaliates by asking for yours, and you want his, but don't want to give yours, and you are in a quandary accordingly—well, in such a case you must have some reason why you do not want to give yours, and your best course will be to state your reasons. If your reasons are not worth stating, or are of a nature which does not admit of statement, you had better let the picture go, or conclude to wear it in your heart but not in your album. 5th. There is considerable room for improvement in your handwriting.

X. S. writes: "In your column of correspondents please inform me how to sprout apple and currant seeds." He also inquires about a periodical concerning which we know nothing, and therefore can give him no information. As for sprouting (or does he mean sprouting) apple and currant seeds, we can give him no useful advice, as it is customary to propagate these plants by cuttings, and not from the seed. Put the seeds in proper soil, and nature will do her best in causing them to sprout.

EMMA (Baltimore, Md.,) says: "I wish to ask you a few questions. 1st. Why, in the Episcopal churches, do the ministers, when they are about to kneel down to pray, say, 'The Lord be with you'—and the people respond, 'And with thy spirit'? 2d. Can you tell me the origin of the saying, 'If you break a looking-glass you will have bad luck for seven years'? 3d. Have you ever heard of the firm of ———? Do you think a letter directed to them as above, would reach them in safety? Are all the answers of riddles sent you, published in the Post under the column of answers?" The portion of the Episcopal ceremony you give was probably, in its origin, a simple wish of the minister that the Lord would be near to answer their prayers, and a responsive wish by the congregation that He would aid the minister in prayer. 2d. We have not heard the looking-glass superstition just as you give it. The ordinary idea is that if a maiden breaks a mirror, a maiden she will remain; if a married woman breaks it, a death will ensue. It comes from the former custom of fortune-tellers to employ mirrors in their magical rites. If the mirror was broken the magician had to give over the operation, and the unlucky questioner failed to obtain an answer. As to the firm named in your third question, a letter addressed as you mention will reach them. We publish the answers to riddles, but not always all that are sent to us.

L. L. writes: "Do you intend to publish in the Post this year, any more stories by the author of 'On Silver Wings?' And will you, or some of the many readers of the Post tell me, why ice, in freezing on windows, assumes such a variety of forms? Are these forms—which assume the finest paintings of art—impressions of plants, flowers, trees, and shrubbery, daguerreotyped by surrounding conditions, and brought out by the freezing process, similar to impressions taken up by the camera, and brought out by a chemical process? Is there any science or philosophy that will analyze this to our understanding, or is it a *freak of nature* that is always to remain a mystery?" We cannot tell, at present, whether or not we shall publish any more stories by this author. Is not our correspondent's imagination rather active in seeing such close photographs of nature in the frost vegetation? The ice crystals simply lengthen out in branching lines, which, from their successive angular departures, somewhat resemble vegetation. We have met with no scientific explanation of this phenomenon, but it is our impression, that it is caused by the movements of electrical currents, produced by the congealing process. It is well known that static electricity tends to branch in a similar manner, and might thus readily produced the phenomenon in question.

RESPECTFULLY DECLINED.—Articles by "Hilda," "Kathleen Roberts," "Linda Lee," and "J. H. L."

E. A. W. (Venango, Pennsylvania) writes: "Can you tell me whether Andrew Jackson Davis's works are reliable, and whether his book entitled "The Templer," is all that it claims to be? Please tell me what you know about the above, and oblige one of your subscribers." These works contain but the opinions of the writer, and we would not like to vouch for any man's opinions as reliable, not even our own, wise as we are expected to be. It has not been our good fortune yet to meet any controversial work that was all it claimed to be.

F. S. (Newport, New York,) says: "I have a few questions I would like you to answer. If, for instance, there are two sisters—the youngest one gets married, and the oldest one is left, they say to the single one—you are left to dance to the pig trough? If you can, tell me what is the meaning of this, and from whence did it originate?" There is also a question by Violet. "Can you tell me anything that will make my complexion clear and white?" The expression given is probably a localism. We have never heard it before, and cannot imagine its meaning. Perhaps some of our readers can give the information desired. If so, we shall be pleased to receive it. As for Violet, she must be aware that nature has decreed that all complexions shall not be clear and white. She had better be very careful of her diet; take regular exercise; avoid cosmetics, and throw out of the window any nostrum given to clear the skin. Then, if nature will not help her, she will have to wear her complexion of its native hue.

B. B. (Philadelphia) writes: "Will you please be so kind as to answer a question or two of much importance to me? 1st. If a husband and wife are not true to each other, and break their marriage vows, so they agree to part, and consult a lawyer, and part, the wife taking her maiden name again. 2d. The wife was married by an adopted name. Was it a lawful marriage? 3d. If either of them should marry again, would it be a lawful marriage without a divorce? Please answer soon." Your firstly contains no semblance of a question that we can discover. If mutually untrue they had better forgive and forget. Secondly, it is the woman that is married, not the name, and no such subterfuge would avail. Thirdly, such a second marriage as you describe, without a divorce, is what the courts call bigamy, and punish by imprisonment, and we must counsel you to avoid it.

LOUISIANA writes: "Please answer a few questions. Where is the city of Laura, mentioned by a modern novelist? Who was most famous for painting angels, Raphael or Guido? Is it a fact that nitrate of silver will cause one's complexion to become blue, and will it remain so?" The city of Laura probably exists in his imagination only. A "Laura" is the enclosure of a monastery, in the Greek church. The well-known Lauras of Palestine, &c., were collections of cells in which hermits lived in strict seclusion, but without a common monastic rule. Neither of these artists is famous simply as a painter of angels. Each had great, though different merit in this line, and we have seen no comparison drawn between them. Nitrate of silver, in the form of Lunar Caustic, has a severe burning effect on the skin. As used in marking-ink, it blackens the skin. To what use of it does our correspondent refer?

Two of our correspondents (O. K., of New York, and B. H., of Hoboken, N. J.) kindly inform us that we have slightly erred in our answer to Lottie, in No. 28 of the Post. The lines quoted,

"To weary hearts, to mourning homes,
God's meekest angel gently comes,"

which we thought were Longfellow's, seem to belong to John G. Whittier, commencing the poem called "The Angel of Patience," by this author. We hope this correction may meet the eye of Lottie. We are obliged to our correspondents for this information, and hope that our friends will always feel themselves privileged to set us right whenever we are found straying from the correct path.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

"THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STARE."

RIDDLER.

WORD SQUARE.

A reward of merit.
In advance.
A magician or priest.
Elsewhere.
A lady's name.

ARITHMETICAL QUESTION.

$800 was divided between A. and B. so that A. got 10 per cent. more than B. And also, $800 was divided between C. and D. so that of every $100 divided C. got $10 more than D. How much did A receive more than D? and D. less than B? JUNIOR.

☞ An Answer is requested.

CONUNDRUMS.

Why is a schoolmaster like a pair of eyebrows? Because he is placed over pupils.

Why is the alphabet supposed to be a fighting character? Because it has always got a black eye, (I.)

Why is a butcher's cart like his boots? Because he carries his calves there.

When is charity like a top? When it begins to hum.

Why is a young lady dismissing a maid-servant every Saturday night like the Romans during Easter? Because she has a gal-a-week, (gala-week.)

Why are photographers the most uncivil of all trades-people? Because when we make application for a copy of our portrait they always reply with a negative.

Why are kisses like the creation? Because they are made out of nothing, and are very good.

[The perpetrator of the above was sentenced to kiss fifteen young ladies as punishment for his offence. He took the matter very coolly, saying that he considered kissing capital punishment.]

ANSWERS TO LAST.

METAGRAM.—Bat, Mat, Bet, Bay.
RIDDLE.—The Lady's Friend.

RECEIPTS.

CABBAGE SOUP.—Take four or six pounds of beef, boil with it some black pepper whole for three hours, cut three or four cabbages in quarters, boil them until they are quite tender, then turn them into a dish, and serve all together.

ONION SOUP.—In two quarts of weak mutton broth slice two turnips and as many carrots; then strain it. Fry six onions cut in slices, when nicely browned add them to the broth; simmer three hours; skim and serve.

LAMB CHOPS.—Take a loin of lamb, cut chops from it half an inch thick, retaining the kidney in its place; dip them into egg and bread-crumbs, fry and serve with fried parsley. When chops are made from a breast of lamb, the red bone at the edge of the breast should be cut off, and the breast par-boiled in water or broth, with a sliced carrot and two or three onions, before it is divided into cutlets, which is done by cutting between every second or third bone, and preparing them, in every respect, as the last. If *house-lamb steaks* are to be done *white*—stew them in milk and water till very tender with a bit of lemon-peel, a little salt, some pepper and mace. Have ready some veal gravy, and put the steaks into it: mix some mushroom powder, a cup of cream, and the least bit of flour; shake the steaks in this liquor, stir it, and let it get quite hot but not boil. Just before you take it up, put in a few white mushrooms. If *brown*—season them with pepper, salt, nutmeg, grated lemon peel, and chopped parsley; but dip them first into egg; fry them quickly. Thicken some gravy with a bit of flour and butter, and add to it a spoonful of port wine.

MAYONNAISE.—Take of cold fish (or of white meat) previously cooked, and from which all bones have been carefully removed; divide it into pieces, not too small, and dip it well in a mixture of oil, vinegar, and pepper. Put the yolks of two or three eggs in a deep dish with some salt and pepper, and stir them till the salt is dissolved and well mixed; then pour in olive oil in drops (or still better in a very slow stream, produced by boring a little hole through the cork of the bottle), stirring the contents of the dish one way all the time; (should the mayonnaise thicken too much, pour in a few drops of vinegar). This should be continued till there is enough mayonnaise to cover the meat (or fish) completely, this having been meanwhile laid on fresh lettuce leaves. Pour the mixture over it, and ornament with meat jelly and hard-boiled eggs.

MARBLE CAKE.—*The White Cake.*—Whites of seven eggs, one cup of butter, two cups of sugar, half a cup of sweet milk, half a teaspoonful of soda, one of cream of tartar, three cups of flour. Bake two hours in a slow oven.